AMONG THIS WEEK'S CONTRIBUTORS

Janet Adam Smith's books include *John Buchan and his World*, 1979.

Sir Darrell Bates's *The Abyssinian Difficulty: The Emperor Theodorus and the Magdala campaign 1867–68* was published in 1979.

Caroline Bingham is the author of *James VI of Scotland*, 1979, and *James I of England*, 1981.

Gordon Brotherston is Professor of Literature at the University of Essex. His books include *Image of the New World: The American continent portrayed in native texts*, 1979.

Terence Cave is the author of *The Cornucopian Text: Problems of writing in the French Renaissance*, 1979.

Humphrey Carpenter is the author of *W. H. Auden: A biography*, 1981.

F. L. Carsten's most recent book, *Essays in German History*, was published last year. His *The First Austrian Republic 1918–1938* will appear later this year.

David Caute's *The Espionage of the Saints: Two essays on silence and the State* has recently been published.

John Clive is Professor of History at Harvard University. His *Thomas Babington Macaulay: The shaping of the historian* was published in 1973.

Philip Conisbee's *Chardin*, 1985, will appear in an English translation later this year.

Alan Coren is Editor of *Punch*.

Claire Cross is the author of *Church and People 1450–1660: The triumph of the laity in the English Church*, 1976.

William Drabkin is a lecturer in Music at the University of Southampton.

Troels Engberg-Pedersen's *Aristotle's Theory of Moral Insight* was published last year.

F. Fernandez-Armesto is a Fellow of St Antony's College, Oxford, and author of *The Canary Islands after the Conquest*, 1982.

R. G. Frey is Senior Lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Liverpool, and is at work on a book on the allocation of scarce medical resources.

Barbara Goodwin is co-author with Keith Taylor of *The Politics of Utopia: A study in theory and practice*, 1982.

Anthony Hartley's *Gaullism: The rise and fall of a political movement* was published in 1971.

Peter Hebblethwaite's *Pope John XXIII: Pope of the Council* was published in 1984. His most recent book, *In the Vatican*, is published this month and will be reviewed in a forthcoming issue of the *TLS*.

Arthur Jacobs's books includes *Arthur Sullivan: A Victorian musician*, 1984.

Wendy James is co-editor of *The Southern Marches of Imperial Ethiopia: Essays in history and social anthropology*, to be published later this year.

Ian Kershaw is Senior Lecturer in Modern History at the University of Manchester. His book *The Hitler Myth: Image and reality in the Third Reich* will be published later this year.

David Levering Lewis is Martin Luther King, Jr, Professor of History at Rutgers University, New Brunswick.

Murray MacBeath is a lecturer in Philosophy at the University of Stirling and is at present teaching at the University of Zimbabwe.

Geoffrey Marshall is a Fellow and Tutor in Politics at The Queen's College, Oxford. His *Constitutional Conventions* was published in 1984.

P. J. Marshall is Professor of History at King's College, London. He is the author, with Glyndwr Williams, of *The Great Map of Mankind: British perceptions of the world in the age of Enlightenment*, 1982. His *East Indian Fortunes: The British in Bengal in the eighteenth century* appeared in 1976.

Adam Mars-Jones is the editor of *Mae West is Dead: Recent lesbian and gay fiction*, 1983.

John Richetti is the author of *Defoe's Narratives: Situations and structures*, 1975.

David Robey is a lecturer in Italian at the University of Oxford. He is the joint author of *Modern Literary Theory: A comparative introduction*, 1982, which will be published in a revised and expanded edition in the summer.

Carol Rumens's collection of poems *Direct Dialling* was published last year.

William St Clair's *Lord Elgin and the Marbles*, 1967, was republished in 1984.

J. A. Sharpe is a lecturer in History at the University of York. He is the author of *Crime in Early Modern England 1550–1750*, 1984.

Andrew Sinclair's *Prohibition: The era of excess* was published in 1962. His *Corsair: The life of J. Pierpont Morgan* appeared in 1981.

Barry Stroud's most recent book, *The Significance of Philosophical Scepticism*, was published in 1984.

Edward Timms's *Karl Kraus: Apocalyptic satirist* will be published this summer.

John Turner is the editor of *Businessmen and Politics*, 1984.

Jeremy Waldron is presently Visiting Professor of Law at the University of California, Berkeley.

Marina Warner's most recent book is *Monuments and Maidens: The allegory of the female form*, 1985.

R. E. Whyte is Director of the British Churches China Study Project.

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A NEW POEM BY TONY HARRISON

TLS
The Times Literary Supplement

FRIDAY 25 APRIL 1986 No 4,334 80p

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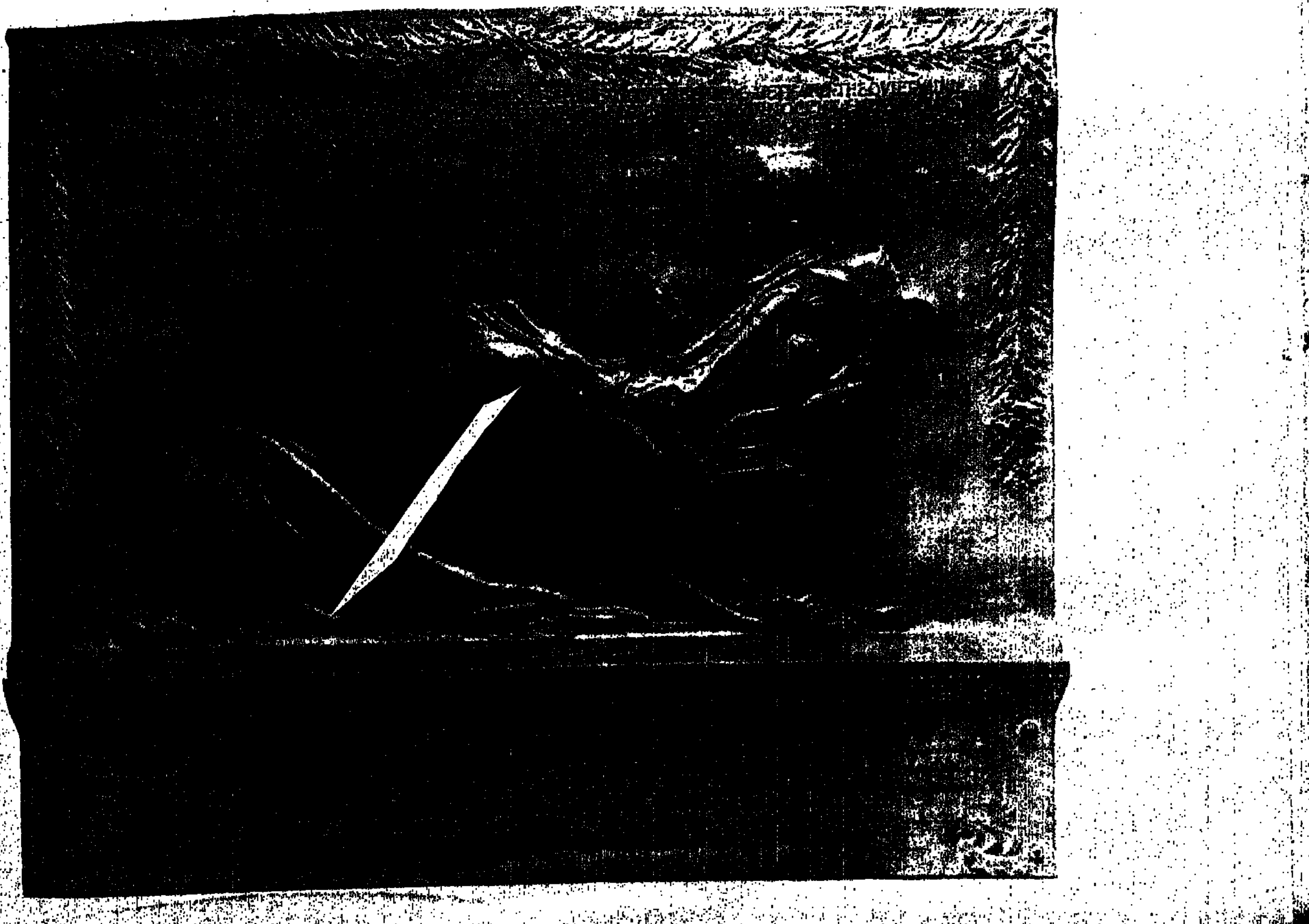

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Cover picture Augustus Saint-Gaudens's bronze relief of Robert Louis Stevenson (1887) is on show at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts until May 11. The exhibition, *Augustus Saint-Gaudens*, is reviewed on page 4

A poet of the self and the weather

Denis Donoghue

HENRY DAVID THOREAU
A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers; Walden, or Life in the Woods; The Maine Woods; Cape Cod
Edited by Robert F. Sayre
1,114pp. The Library of America. $27.50.
0940450275
SHARON CAMERON
Writing Nature: Henry Thoreau's Journal
173pp. Oxford University Press. £15.
0195035704

The Library of America has reprinted, in one sumptuous volume (to be published in the UK by Cambridge University Press later in the year), the four books by which Thoreau is known to assiduous readers. Two of them, *A Week* (1849) and *Walden* (1854), were the only books he published in his lifetime. After his death on May 6, 1862, his essays and manuscripts were gathered together in various forms and published as a spate of books: *Excursions* (1863), *The Maine Woods* (1864), *Cape Cod* (1865), *Letters to Various Persons* (1865) and *A Yankee in Canada, with Anti-Slavery and Reform Papers* (1866). Of these, only *The Maine Woods* and *Cape Cod* in any sense fulfilled Thoreau's intentions, and only they are included in the new volume.

A Week is an account of a trip Thoreau took with his brother – two weeks, in fact, from August 31 to September 13, 1839 – a trip sufficiently meandering to allow for sundry ruminations on mythology, fish, the New Testament, the nature of history, Homer, music, the village of Nashua, and anything else that came into Thoreau's head. *Walden* is a description of Thoreau's life from July 4, 1845, the Independence Day on which he moved into the shack he had built at Walden Pond, to September 6, 1847, the day on which he took up the next of what he regarded as his several lives. *The Maine Woods* brings together the three reports Thoreau made of trips to the backwoods of Maine in August 1846, September 1853 and July 1857. *Cape Cod* gives an account of his trips to the Cape in 1849, 1850 and 1853: its most memorable passage tells of the wreck, in October 1849, of the St John, carrying emigrants from Ireland. Several phrases from Thoreau's account have been incorporated in the first stanza of Robert Lowell's "The Quaker Graveyard in Nantucket", a description of a drowned sailor: "Light / Flashed from his matted head and marble feet".

The Library of America volume doesn't include "Civil Disobedience", the lecture Thoreau gave on January 26, 1848, eighteen months after spending a night in jail for refusing to pay his poll tax: his refusal was a protest against the role of the state in perpetuating slavery. Published in 1849, "Civil Disobedience" has become a gospel of non-violent opposition. Gandhi read it in that light, and wrote to Tolstoy about it. It became a sacred text for Martin Luther King, Jr, the Civil Rights movement, and protesters against American involvement in Vietnam. "Civil Disobedience" and *Walden* are Thoreau's supreme communications to the common reader, and they are regularly printed together in popular editions: they are cherished for holding out a vision of guiltless residence in the world.

The form of Thoreau's posthumous publications had one regrettable consequence: by 1866 his reputation was chiefly in the literature of natural history, botany and travel. His books were often compared to Gilbert White's *The Natural History of Selborne*. The complete *Journal*, edited by Bradford Torrey and Francis H. Allen, was published only in 1906, as fourteen of the twenty volumes which make up the Walden Edition. The fourteen were reprinted as two by Dover Publications in 1962. But selections from Thoreau's writings continue to be published which insist upon his adherence to a few seasonal themes.

Thoreau's reputation, while he lived, was a local matter: he was regarded as one of Emerson's several meek philosophers, hardly distinguishable from the younger William Ellery Channing or Bronson Alcott. In 1853 Thoreau described himself as "a mystic, a transcendentalist, and a natural philosopher to boot", a description sufficiently Emersonian to keep him by the Master's side. Emerson, too, assumed that Thoreau was merely one of his disciples. In September 1841 he confided to his journal a conversation which must have been awkward:

> I told H. T. that his freedom is in the form, but he does not disclose new matter. I am very familiar with all his thoughts – they are my own quite originally drest. But if the question be, what new ideas has he thrown into circulation, he has not yet told what that is which he was created to say.

Only after Thoreau's death did Emerson discover in him a particular force of style. "In reading him," he said, "I find the same thought, the same spirit that is in me, but he takes a step beyond, & illustrates by excellent images that which I should have conveyed in a sleepy generality."

But on the whole, Thoreau was heard only as his master's voice. Henry James thought of him as one of those "Concord-haunting figures which are not so much interesting in themselves as interesting because for a season Emerson thought them so." It was a sign of Emerson's tact that he let his courtesy to those young men "pass for adhesion". He willingly interpreted Transcendentalism, but never thought of putting its tenets into practice. It was Thoreau who, in James's version, "took upon himself to be, in the concrete, the sort of person that Emerson's 'scholar' was in the abstract, and who paid for it by having a shorter life than that fine adumbration". Paid for it, too, even while he lived, by suffering "something of the *amoindrissement* of eccentricity".

But it was James Russell Lowell who said nearly everything that could be said against Thoreau's form of discipleship. In 1865 Lowell ridiculed Transcendentalism as "the maid of all work for those who could not think", and referred to Thoreau's writings as strawberries from Emerson's garden. Thoreau's imagination, he said, was receptive rather than active; he had a talent for appreciation, but his critical power was inadequate "from want of continuity of mind". His self-conceit was endless: he valued everything "in proportion as he fancied it to be exclusively his own", and sought "a seclusion which keeps him in the public eye". His relation to the wilderness was a gross example of "the modern sentimentality about Nature", and entirely compatible with a cynical contempt for humanity. His experiment at Walden Pond presupposed and capitalized upon the civilization it theoretically abjured.

Lowell's attack on Thoreau's self-conceit remained influential even during the years in which Thoreau's literary reputation was transformed: it culminated in Perry Miller's *Consciousness in Concord* (1958), which argued that after the commercial failure of *A Week* and *Walden* Thoreau sought failure as the only condition spiritually adequate to his self-esteem. Posterity was called upon to provide the only reader sufficiently appreciative of his genius. But the publication of the complete *Journal* made it difficult, though not impossible, to regard Thoreau as Emerson's echo.

Thoreau started keeping a journal in the autumn of 1837, and continued until November 2, 1861, when he became too ill to persist. Many readers have construed the journal as omnivorous writing from which Thoreau extracted the most publishable bits for *A Week*, *Walden*, and a few essays. But some scholars take a far warmer view of it. To the connoisseur, as Walter Harding has remarked, the *Journal* is "the best of Thoreau". Guy Davenport has argued in *The Geography of the Imagination* that "Thoreau's finest thought remained in the privacy of his rich notebooks because of the dullness of the public interest, which he treated to inspired insults and ironic exhortations, daring to risk his meditations on its blank surface." Sharon Cameron claims that the journal is "the great nineteenth century American meditation on nature".

The busiest years of the journal were between 1851 and 1861. In *Writing Nature* Professor Cameron concentrates on the years 1850–52 because "it is during this time that Thoreau began to regard – and to speak of – the *Journal* as an autonomous composition", indeed as his central literary enterprise.

It is an essential part of Cameron's argument that the *Journal* must be separated from Thoreau's published writing, and especially from *Walden*. Indeed, she proposes to show that the relation between mind and the natural world which we find in the *Journal* differs in nearly every respect from the relation as it obtains in *Walden*. Most students of Thoreau

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have tried to reconcile his apparently conflicting allegiances to the natural and the social worlds, and have rebuked him for any residual incompatibility. Cameron hopes to resolve the matter by regarding *A Week* and *Walden* as merely partial and socially prudent expressions; the complete truth is in the *Journal*. Thoreau's motive in the *Journal* was "a passion for nature divorced from social meaning". In the *Journal*, "contemplation of nature bereaves the mind of natural counterparts"; that is to say, I assume, that it bereaves it of analogies between natural law and moral law. In *A Week* and *Walden* Thoreau gratified his readers by giving them images of the mutuality of nature and man. *Walden*, according to Cameron, presents "not nature but the seductive rapprochement of the natural and the social to which, put in the harshest terms, nature is sacrificed". In the *Journal*, Thoreau released the natural world from the obligation of providing congenial analogies.

On April 11, 1852, Thoreau wrote in the *Journal*: "It appears to be a law that you cannot have a deep sympathy with both man & nature." *A Week*, "Ktaadn" and *Walden* pretend that you can be equally and continuously sympathetic to both. To produce "an account of nature visible for others", and to ingratiate himself with his readers, Thoreau diverted himself from his best subject, his "unmediated relation to nature". The privacy of the *Journal* enabled him to tell the truth, that – as in the *Journal* of January 5, 1850 – "there is no interpreter between us and our consciousness".

Cameron describes three technical procedures by which Thoreau, in the *Journal*, tries to express an unmediated relation to nature. The first is to unsettle perspectives "by raising the question of how part of a phenomenon is related to the whole of that phenomenon or to another phenomenon". This is a version of "perspective by incongruity", in Kenneth Burke's phrase, a technique for achieving new orientations by arranging wilful incongruities, impious juxtapositions which dislodge old pieties.

Thoreau's second procedure, according to Cameron, is to write human beings "virtually out of the picture", and to insist on "nature's infinite self-referentiality". It entails the rejection of Wordsworth's genial sense, in the Preface to *The Excursion*, of the mutual fittingness of mind and the external world.

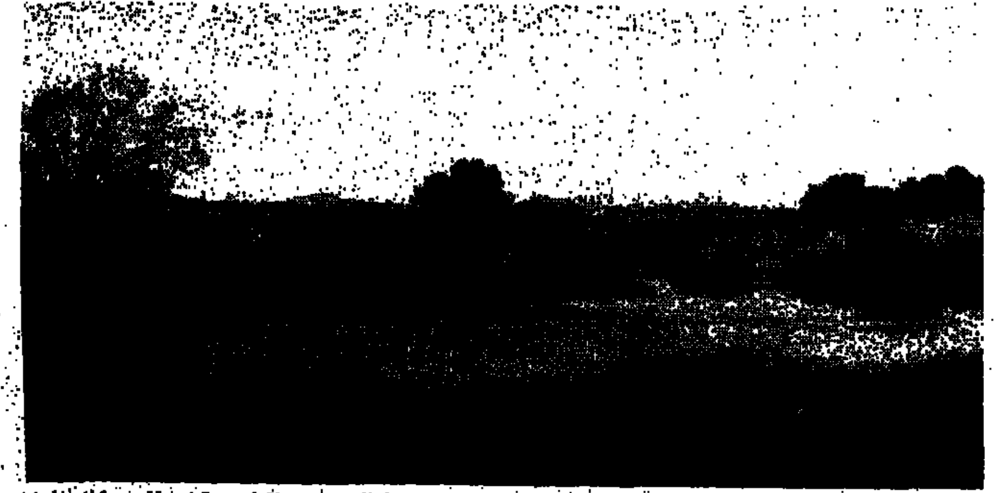
The third procedure involves – though Cameron doesn't quite say this – Thoreau's making an exception in his own favour. Wordsworth has deluded himself. Nature is alien to man. But Thoreau can "impersonate the alienness", can "voice nature or be nature's voice", according to his formula: Not I, but nature in me. To do this, he projects as speaker of the *Journal* a "second person", a recording consciousness whose sole function is "to reflect natural occurrence". Thus, according to Cameron: "If the *Journal*'s second person is the speaker, is the access to the *Journal*'s subject, the 'I' is the observer, is its audience." So Thoreau must ventriloquize a discourse such that "as far as possible it is its own first and second person". Presumably the "I" who listens corresponds to an ideally responsive Posterity. The "I" who speaks is a projected self capable of internalizing natural events which to other people remain opaque.

I hope I have not grievously misrepresented an argument which I find difficult. The first problem is that it depends upon seeing the *Journal* and *Walden* as distinct and incompatible works. But J. Lyndon Shanley has shown, in *The Making of Walden* (1957) and his edition of *Walden* (1971), that Thoreau started writing the book, some time after February 1846, by gathering "the material which lay everywhere in his journals", reverting to journal entries he had written at various times between 1840 and 1845. For the successive versions of *Walden* he took further material from the journals, and "in some cases he assembled notes on a topic by tearing pages out of his journals". After the publication of *A Week* in May 1849 he worked intermittently on revisions of the first three versions of *Walden*, but he didn't write much more of it till January or February 1852. The decision to make the *Journal* an autonomous work was taken, according to Cameron, in 1850; but Professor Shanley has shown that on January 17, 1852, Thoreau wrote two items in the journal which he clearly intended using in the book. More material for *Walden* "appears frequently in the journals of succeeding weeks and months". Shanley reports:

> He wrote version IV at various times during 1852. He drew much of the new material for it from his journals for 1850, 1851, and the first half of 1852; there are also a few items from September, October, and November 1852.

The final version of *Walden* was sent to the printer in late February or early March, 1854.

In any ordinary sense, therefore, there is a close, not to say continuous, relation between the *Journal* and *Walden*. Cameron is well aware of this, but she seems to think it doesn't matter to any of the considerations she cares about. She finds *Walden* deeply evasive about mind and nature, and the *Journal* more honest because it disposes the question of mind and nature in "multiple theatricalizations of attitudes". It would demean her argument if I were to take it as merely claiming that Thoreau told the truth when he talked to himself and, when he wrote for the general public, gave the dullards what they wanted to hear. But to substantiate her argument Cameron would have to show that even when Thoreau used notes from the journal for his revisions of *Walden* he changed the text and made it amenable to conventionally Wordsworthian expectations. She has tried to do this, but it has required desperate pleading.



A detail from Henri-Joseph Harpignies's "Au Bord de l'Oise", 1883, one of the pictures in the exhibition The John Tillotson Bequest: Paintings and drawings of the Barbizon School from the Fitzwilliam Museum, Cambridge *at Hazlitt, Gooden and Fox, 38 Bury Street, St James's London SW1 until May 16, and reproduced in its catalogue (Cambridge: Fitzwilliam Museum. £5.)*

Some of Cameron's commentaries on particular passages from the *Journal*, I take pleasure in reporting, are quite brilliant: these passages have never before been read with such precision. The commentaries which strike me as perverse are those which are offered to illustrate, with notable insistence, an argument already enforced in more general terms. My own sense of the *Journal* is that you can find in it nearly anything you look for, and you can quote it to any purpose. It provides texts for virtually any epistemology you care to describe. Much of it seems to me philosophically naive; as in Thoreau's complaint (October 6, 1857) that *Modern Painters* isn't "a more out-of-door book", and that Ruskin "does not describe Nature as Nature, but as Turner painted her"; "How much is written about Nature as somebody has portrayed her, how little about Nature as she is, and chiefly concerns us, i.e. how much prose, how little poetry!"

But I agree that it is in the *Journal*, more than in the published books, that we find an unEmersonian Thoreau. We find him in his style, rather than in any novelty of theme or motif. Thoreau is a moody writer, often insecure in tone, as if he couldn't decide whether the theme in hand was really adequate to his sensibility or not; or whether he was addressing a person or a void. It is probably as vain to turn him into a philosopher as to turn Wallace Stevens into one. They are both misleading when we take them seriously on their own terms. The range of their moods, too, is about equal, and might be charted accurately enough by saying that in one mood Thoreau, like Stevens, tended to say, "Soldier, there is a war between the mind / And sky", and in a more specifying mood that

> we live in a place
> That is not our own and, much more, not ourselves
> And hard it is in spite of blazoned days.

and nevertheless – a third mood – that

> Ecstatic identities
> Between one's self and the weather and the things
> Of the weather are the belief in one's element . . .

Thoreau, like Stevens, seems to me a poet of one's self and the weather and the things of the weather, best read as an expert in pleasure rather than in knowledge. It is edifying to find him ready to pay attention, nearly always, to outer and inner weather. But I can't see him as an epistemologist. The claims he makes upon an unmediated relation to nature are vain, if for no other reason than the fact that language has already vetoed the possibility. Relatedness is a linguistic category. He was observant, committed to details, but he seems in a curious way to have distrusted the objects he attended to, and thought they would intrude upon his numinous sense of a greater life they merely punctuated. This may be what Cameron has in view when she says that in the *Journal* Thoreau has to an especial degree "an interest in relations which seem devoid of content, or whose content could be specified as man's pleasure in his ability to negotiate the continuously reiterated terms of likeness and change". When I first read that sentence, I thought it made Thoreau sound too much like Stevens, who often sets his mind, that necessary angel, astir upon a play of resemblance and difference between events which hardly survive the play. But I see now that what mainly bothered me was that if we make Thoreau sound like Stevens, it becomes harder to keep him close to Frost, which is where my first prejudice wanted to have him.

Emerson saw the unEmersonian Thoreau in the "strut" of his style, when he read the journals in the weeks after Thoreau's death. The strut was Thoreau's way of being quirky, truculent, cutting a dash. The punning conceit was far more congenial to him than to Emerson. Sometimes it became a trick, his darting between the literal and the figurative character of the words as if to assure himself (and his putative reader, for the moment) of a correspondence between nature, language and mind. He couldn't examine a leaf without thinking of turning over a new one. Professor Cameron argues that both the literal and the figurative are produced, in the *Journal*, under the sign of despair:

> While figurative language may command an ample repertoire to "identify" what is seen, in the *Journal* such language seems ultimately at the same loss as the literal language to whose rescue it has come.

But the examples she chooses – "grass like a sea of mowing", for one – seem to me to be free of the particular disability she describes.

She doesn't point out, perhaps because it is evident, that while Thoreau's common style has been to school with Donne, Herbert and Sir Thomas Browne, it has also caught a gleam of its own time, flashing as if between Carlyle and Byron. Some readers of Thoreau are dismayed by the flash – "he writes with the taunt of the virtuoso", Irving Howe complains in *The American Newness* – and there is indeed a question of vulgarity. But Thoreau's poorest writing is done not when he shows off but when he hesitates before deciding how wildly he will show off; a note of Massachusetts gentility spoils what we have reason to call the effect. His true commanding style, as in the superb "Spring" chapter of *Walden*, arises from his sense that he is as powerfully alive in the English (or American) language as inventive Nature is alive, with its own life, in the given world.

Resisting the environment

Daniel Penrice

ALBERT J. VON FRANK
The Sacred Game: Provincialism and frontier consciousness in American literature 1630–1860
188pp. Cambridge University Press, £20.
0 521 30159 9

Albert J. von Frank argues in *The Sacred Game* that provincial conditions were the "ordinary context for artistic expression" in early America and that such conditions "seem largely to account for what appears characteristic or nationally distinctive in the literature" of the period. Defining "provincial cultures" as "those with an absence or scarcity of cultural artifacts together with a marked desire for them", von Frank is interested in the resistance of embattled conservatives to a culturally attenuated environment – a resistance embodied in what he calls "frontier consciousness". Though his stated intention is merely to examine various aspects of American literary provincialism as exemplified in the work of seven pre-Civil War writers, von Frank has treated his subject so as to bring out some impressively far-reaching implications.

The first three writers to be considered in *The Sacred Game* are the Puritan poet Anne Bradstreet and the Federalist-period authors Royall Tyler and Timothy Dwight – all relatively neglected, both in criticism and in the classroom. What interests von Frank about such writers is that they are all, in his terms, "defeated conservatives", uneasy provincials whose often ironic (and invariably doomed) struggles against a provincial environment left distinctive imprints in their works. With Bradstreet it is a case of a personal defeat actually resulting in a tougher and more expressive poetic style, though von Frank is intrigued by the way in which the very awkwardness of Bradstreet's earlier poetry reveals an attempt to create through language nothing less than a "substitute environment". In Tyler's rather clumsy imitation of Sheridan in *The Contrast*, as well as in Dwight's georgic pastiche, *Greenfield Hill*, von Frank finds revealing collisions between an "American" content and the mimicry of British style, and demonstrates in other ways how resistance to a provincial setting inevitably resulted in greater provincialism.

Though von Frank is careful to note that he is in no sense writing a full-fledged "history" of frontier consciousness, a kind of narrative begins to emerge when he turns to his four nineteenth-century writers. In the work of Washington Irving, for example, von Frank sees the contradictions of the provincial situation swimming into the light of consciousness and being dramatically enacted in both the structure and style of *The Sketch Book*; while it is in Hawthorne, in turn, that the author finds an American writer finally able to transform an awareness of provincial limitation into a powerfully original way of interpreting American experience. Yet, though the publication of *The Scarlet Letter* in 1850 was to set the stage for the extraordinary half-decade of American literary achievement that immediately followed, the spectre of European cultural tradition continued to haunt the provincial American mind. In the two concluding chapters of *The Sacred Game*, von Frank considers Margaret Fuller and Emerson in order to contrast conservative and liberal responses, respectively, to this persistent American dilemma in an era of increasing literary nationalism.

Such a summary hardly does justice to the cogency of von Frank's argument, one that is sustained throughout with both historical imagination and a lively and careful attention to his chosen texts. If the book has a fault it lies in the way in which, at points in its earlier chapters, the subtlety of the author's reasoning threatens to overwhelm the relative slightness of the works under discussion; though it should also be said that von Frank avoids reducing the writings of Bradstreet, Tyler and Dwight to mere examples of a tendency or manifestation of "the age". The chapters on Hawthorne and Emerson shed genuinely new light on perennial concerns (Hawthorne's elaborate formal self-consciousness, for example, or the Emersonian dialectic of Freedom versus Fate)

The Marx problem book

Alan Ryan

JON ELSTER
Making Sense of Marx
556pp. Cambridge University Press. £35 (paperback, £10.95).
0 521 22896 4

The title of Jon Elster's book may induce a queasy feeling in the pious. The suggestion that we need to "make sense" of Marx smacks of *lèse-majesté*; did Marx not make perfectly adequate sense of himself? Are we to suppose that Marx spent his life struggling towards a revelation finally vouchsafed to Professor Elster? Not exactly. Elster approaches Marx with a nicely balanced mixture of gratitude and scepticism. "It is", he writes,

> not possible today, morally or intellectually, to be a Marxist in the traditional sense. This would be someone who accepted all or most of the views which Marx held to be true and important – scientific socialism, the labour theory of value or the theory of the falling rate of profit, together with other and more defensible views. But, speaking now for myself only, I believe it is still possible to be a Marxist in a rather different sense of the term. I find that most of the views *I* hold to be true and important I can trace back to Marx. This includes methodology, substantive theories and, above all, values. The critique of exploitation and alienation remains central.

Some readers may wonder whether this is the recipe for a wholly successful book. If the weight is to fall on making sense of *Marx*, ought not Elster to suspend his own disbelief in Marx's central claims, in favour of sympathetic reconstruction; if, on the other hand, the weight is to fall on making sense of the subject-matter of Marx's theory, such as social class, exploitation, the economic basis of the state, what is the point of approaching the issues by way of Marx's mistakes? Can it be worth devoting 550 pages of densely reasoned text to the proposition that Marx got it right when he anticipated *Logic and Society*, *Ulysses and the Sirens* and *Sour Grapes* and otherwise got it wrong? Elster's exploration of individual and collective rationality and irrationality in those books was full of interest. What is not clear is what he thinks he has added when he endorses those of Marx's claims consistent with his own earlier arguments and criticizes those of Marx's claims which are inconsistent with them. Elster's *modus operandi* smacks a little of grave robbery; we rummage about in the coffin and pocket whatever takes our fancy – legitimate enough if we think of social science as accumulating a stock of true propositions which we can list and endorse, while we list and reject those we see to be false, but not appealing if we suppose that the history of ideas demands a more holistic or a more inward approach.

Those doubts aside, *Making Sense of Marx* is splendid; it is endlessly ingenious, inventive and imaginative; it is built on apparently inexhaustible reserves of textual scholarship; it is written in sober, lucid and careful prose; and it tackles issues whose intrinsic interest is undeniable – from the problem of holistic explanations in social science to the social organization of utopia. If Elster's piecemeal approach makes for slow reading, it also makes for orderly thought, and it gives the book something of the character of an encyclopaedia of Marx-problems, to which one will gratefully return for years to come. If Marx's unreconstructed defenders will think Elster too harsh, and his unreconstructed critics will think him too lenient, that is at least a tribute to his even-handedness.

Elster begins with an onslaught on Marx's methodological preconceptions. Contrary to those who accept that Marx made many mistakes but who none the less stand up for his method, Elster holds that what is most distinctive in Marx's methodology is most distinctively wrong. He was a holistic thinker who resorted to functional explanation; that is, he explained the behaviour of capitalists and their employees in terms of the "needs" or "demands" of capital or of the capitalist mode of production. When British governments passed legislation to protect the welfare of factory workers and in the process made the workers less likely to resort to the violent overthrow of capitalism, Marx explained this in terms of the system protecting itself against threat. Such explanations are intrinsically vicious. The only acceptable explanations in social science are those based on the beliefs and goals of individuals, together with an account of the unanticipated consequences of their behaviour, and whatever explanations we can find of their having the beliefs and goals they do.

Certainly social systems exhibit behaviour of the kind Marx concentrated on – capitalists all rush to take advantage of the productivity of a new machine, but the effect of their actions is to drive prices down and so to deprive themselves collectively of the extra profits they had individually hoped to make. This, though, is an impeccably individualist explanation; Marx is to be praised for making this sort of phenomenon central to his account of capitalism and for the accuracy and ingenuity of his detailed causal accounts of its happening. He is not to be followed when he refers windily to the system bringing about events and fails to supply any mechanism by which the effects are achieved.

If Marx's virtues are to shine through his addiction to bad methodological habits, what is needed is an examination of his view of human nature – so that we have some overall idea of what beliefs and goals commonly motivate human individuals – and then a piecemeal examination of his views on value, exploitation, history, modes of production, the nature of politics, revolution and the ultimate communist society. A good sample of the strengths of Elster's approach is his discussion of that old chestnut, what we are going to do in utopia. Elster observes that there is the germ of an inconsistency in Marx's valuing of creativity rather than consumption: "in a society entirely made up of active, creative individuals, nobody would be bothered to read, watch or otherwise enjoy what others are producing, except to learn from them". He takes this to show that Marx overdoes the emphasis on altruism, and claims that some egoism is required in order to allow altruism to get to work. Similarly, unless some people just want to consume what others provide, at least some of the time, creation is pointless.

This is eminently forgivable as the expression of a sort of over-exuberant criticism of the capitalist narrowing of people's opportunities, abilities and tastes. But it raises questions about the plausibility of other assumptions made by Marx. For instance, can it be true that there will be no "one-sided" creation under communism? Echoing Hannah Arendt, who used to complain that Marx turned everything serious into a hobby when he insisted that we should all become "many-sided" under socialism, Elster asks whether it is reasonable to expect Milton to break off from the composition of *Paradise Lost* in order to go hunting, or fishing, to keep cattle or engage in "critical criticism", as the *German Ideology* envisages. If he were to do so, he would not be treating creativity as "a damned serious business" in the way the *Grundrisse* insists we must: but if he were obsessively concerned with his masterpiece, he would hardly be displaying the talent for all-round, unabsorbed creation anticipated in the *German Ideology*. In general, says Elster, echoing Isaiah Berlin and Charles Taylor among others, there is something desperately implausible about Marx's belief that there are simply no costs whatever to life under communism.

Elster's discussion of Marx's views on exploitation is a good example of the strengths and weaknesses of the book. In line with his disposition to make much of Marx's values and less of the ideas which Marx himself was proud of, Elster treats Marx's discussion of exploitation as a discussion of the injustice of exploitative systems. The thought, which comes from the Harvard economist John Roemer, is that there is an injustice when some people *cannot* obtain goods which embody as much labour as they themselves perform. The test is not behavioural – someone who could receive as much as he contributes, but chooses not to, is not exploited; and it is not a simple consequence of the fact that some people employ others – with a little ingenuity you can produce examples in which there is some profit-making but everyone still ends up getting the labour equivalent of what they contribute.

It is not at all clear to me that this way of treating exploitation catches the point of Marx's own discussion. It may well be a better treatment, and it may lead on to more fruitful inquiries into distributive injustice in market economies, of course. But if we are supposed to be making sense of Marx, it is not clear that this is the way to do it. Elster is more concerned with following out the ideas of Roemer and G. A. Cohen than in following out the oddities of his ostensible target, and therefore treats arguments about exploitation as branches of an argument about Marx's conception of justice. But there is much to be said for the view that Marx deliberately refuses to adopt any conception of justice as his own because he is more interested in the question of what comes *after* justice – to which the answer appears to be, a new kind of communal freedom.

Marx regarded his discussion of exploitation as part of the solution of the riddle of the origins of profit under capitalism. Once Elster has thrown out Marx's exploitation theory of profit on the grounds of explanatory inadequacy, all he has left are questions about justice. But arguments about justice are notoriously slippery, and, handled in the kind of individualistic framework that is proposed here, they tend to collapse into the swapping of opinions. Thus, Elster quotes Cohen arguing that the vast differences in consumption between capitalists and workers humiliate the workers – but the audience of *Dynasty* and *Dallas* would roar with laughter at the thought they were wallowing in self-abasement. Elster thinks that because skilled work is intrinsically more enjoyable than unskilled work, the skilled do not really need extra pay to induce them to perform – which ignores such obvious difficulties as the fact that I cannot share the psychic satisfactions of my work with my dependants whereas I can share my take-home pay. Doubtless in a very different world things would be very different, but Elster resolutely refuses to throw up his hands and say that in utopia all problems will have vanished, so his room for manoeuvre is more restricted than Marx's was.

It is, however, a merit of the book that it induces this sort of dissent. One may feel by the end that for Elster to call himself any sort of Marxist is a piece of sentimentality entirely at odds with the intellectual rigour of what precedes his declaration. One may feel that a committed Marxist could read the whole book with his faith unshaken, because he would think that Elster's methodological individualism just missed the point of Marx's methodology. This might well be the reaction of anyone convinced by Richard Miller's recent *Analyzing Marx* (1984), which suggests that the high proportion of tautological and unfalsifiable claims in Marx's own theories is par for the course in all scientific work and that Marx was much more genuinely Darwinian in his approach to social science than most of his critics have thought. Well before the end, one may feel that Professor Elster is better employed writing the deft, brisk pieces of analysis which his earlier books show off to such advantage. But *Making Sense of Marx* is a monument to patience, open-mindedness, intellectual scrupulousness and straightforward intelligence which can stand comparison with anything in the vast literature on Marx and modern social theory.

Socialism on the Threshold of the Twenty-first Century edited by Miloš Nikolić (311pp. Verso. £16.50. 0 86091 123 3) has recently been published, a collection of papers that were presented and discussed at the Tenth Round Table Conference held in October last year in Cavtat, near Dubrovnik in Yugoslavia. Its purpose was to "bring together theoreticians and activists who represent different kinds of socialist practice and ideological-theoretical orientations and traditions". Among the twenty contributions are Colette Audrey on "Socialism Tomorrow" and Raymond Williams on "Towards Many Socialisms".

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With Splenditello and Sequoia

Mary Lefkowitz

RUDOLPH M. BELL
Holy Anorexia
248pp. University of Chicago Press. £18.95.
0 226 04204 9
JUDITH C. BROWN
Immodest Acts: The life of a lesbian nun in Renaissance Italy
214pp. Oxford University Press. £12.50.
0 19 503675 1
ROSEMARY CURB and **NANCY MANAHAN (Editors)**
Breaking Silence: Lesbian nuns on convent sexuality
371pp. Columbus. £9.95.
0 86287 255 3

The notion of perpetual virginity has been a distinctive and, despite all odds, enduring legacy of the Christian Church. Apart from the twelve aristocratic virgins who tended the hearth of Vesta in the Roman Forum, Greek and Roman priestesses were required to be celibate only for a limited time, until their marriage, or after their widowhood. But once St Paul and his followers had established that celibacy was preferable, especially in women, Christian women left their families and banded together in celibate groups, in order to study Scripture and to practise their religion in isolation from the world. It is possible to appreciate how in the fourth century St Jerome was able to persuade aristocratic virgins of his acquaintance to remain virgins and to devote their lives to study of the sacred texts, since he described to them a spiritual marriage with Jesus that sounded even more gratifying than intercourse with an ordinary bridegroom. But for the women in the first centuries of the Church's existence, the pious language of the hagiographers gives little indication of what motives other than religious ones led girls and women of all ages and backgrounds to devote their lives to the service of God. Perhaps there were none; but few historians born after Marx and Freud seem willing to believe that piety alone could compel a woman to endure the rigours of conventual life.

Historians of late antiquity must read between the lines and speculate on the basis of modern analogies, in order to discover the personal considerations behind the martyrdoms of the first women saints. For the later periods, fortunately, more extensive records exist, correspondence, court testimony, even autobiographies. Rudolph M. Bell has discerned in the lives of 261 Italian nuns from the thirteenth to the mid-nineteenth century evidence of the presence of the syndrome now known as anorexia nervosa. But where the modern anorectic claims that her goal is slimness, medieval nuns sought by fasting to mortify the flesh. The most influential of these, St Catherine of Siena (1347–80), from the age of sixteen subsisted only on bread, water and raw vegetables; she flagellated herself three times a day with an iron chain. Once she even compelled herself to drink the pus from the cancerous breast sores of a woman she was tending, though in this line of mortification she was surpassed by St Veronica Giuliani (1660–1727), who once ate a plate of cat vomit and was ordered on occasion to clean convent floors with her tongue. On the basis of the birth-date of her next sibling and Catherine's own recollections, Bell suggests in *Holy Anorexia* that the way her mother nursed her may have influenced (at least indirectly) Catherine's peculiar eating habits. But even though Catherine is silent about them, other factors may have played an even more important role in her decision to become a nun and a saint: her mother bore twenty-one babies; her twin sister died at birth; her favourite surviving sister died in childbirth. By starving themselves, Catherine and other anorectic girls surely realized that they were able to determine their own futures; by ruining their looks they rendered themselves unmarriageable and infertile, and so were able to avoid the pattern of death in childbirth that they had so often seen around them.

Partly because she does not try to trace a single pattern in a large number of ultimately individual cases, Judith C. Brown's sensitive and dispassionate study of one nun's experience makes rather more interesting and informative reading. *Immodest Acts* describes the life of Benedetta Carlini (1590–1661), who was dedicated at birth by her father to a religious life, and entered the Theatine convent at Pescia when she was nine. In an age when good deeds had replaced mystical experience as an indication of saintliness, Benedetta (rather embarrassingly for the Church hierarchy) had a series of visions that rivalled those of St Catherine, a saint whose life Benedetta had studied and consciously sought to emulate. Benedetta received the stigmata, and claimed not only to have married Jesus, but to have received from him, rather painfully because of its large size, his heart in exchange for hers.

Like Catherine, Benedetta starved herself in what Brown acutely describes as a simultaneous demonstration of piety and denial of her femininity, though Benedetta, unlike Catherine, was seen taking salami and Cremonese-style mortadella to eat when she thought she would not be observed. But most exceptionally of all, Benedetta, not in her own person but as her guardian angel, "Splenditello", engaged in sexual intercourse with the young illiterate nun Bartolomea who had been assigned to her as companion. Such "female sodomy", a sin too shameful to name, of course could not be tolerated; after extensive ecclesiatical investigation, Benedetta was condemned to live the remaining thirty-five years of her life in solitary confinement. The surviving testimony offers no hint of why in modern terms Benedetta felt justified in commiting a crime that in thirteenth-century France had been punishable by mutilation and death; she and her colleagues considered all such acts to be the work of the Devil.

Homosexual nuns in America today, although they may not always seem so to themselves, are clearly more fortunate, at least so far as one can gather from *Breaking Silence*. Like much "oral history", this collection of reminiscences and interviews of fifty women would have profited from the skilled treatment Benedetta's story received from Judith Brown. But the editors, Rosemary Curb and Nancy Manahan, are themselves too involved in the process of self-discovery and disclosure to distance themselves from their material and to be able to describe to the uninitiated the ambience either of lay Catholic society or of the convents. Many of the voices in this volume speak with deep nostalgic respect for the old traditions of the Church; but whereas in seventeenth-century Tuscany becoming a nun would have been considered an honourable and often a sensible course of life for girls even of the best families, in modern secular and materialistic America parents and friends seem more frequently to have been shocked and saddened, when girls, upon their graduation from high school, volunteered to take the vows of obedience, chastity and poverty.

The narrators seem to have been comfortable only with the last of these vows. Obedience presents a particular problem in a country where independence is valued often to an absurd degree. Chastity presented little problem for most of the narrators before they entered the convent; the crushes they had on the nuns teaching at their schools involved nothing physical. But once within the community they were warned against, and soon made, "particular friendships" with other women their age. The girls were told not to do anything that might stimulate them sexually, such as inserting a tampon, or attaching a sanitary towel too tightly. Some flagellated themselves in the traditional way, or at least confessed their "impure thoughts and impure manipulations"; but others actually learned from other women how to masturbate. One woman, like Benedetta, assumed a male *alter ego* in order to express love for another Sister. Most left the convent when they felt that they could no longer be considered celibate. Others, in order to remain Catholic though not in religious life, redefined celibacy as sexuality without marriage and family, and saw their involvement with other ex-nuns as an alternative form of religious community.

Once over the metaphorical wall and out of the closet, many seem to have made a new religion out of their lesbianism. A few, in protest against patriarchal society, have abandoned their surnames or adopted allegorical names like Sequoia or Coriander. They demonstrate their sexual orientation by their dress or by action (two photographs show the editors happily embracing). Some have substituted for Christianity the worship of a "pagan" earth goddess with special rituals for women: "when we raise a cone of power and feel our collective energies spiralling upward, I want us to feel very earthy". But this sort of behaviour, which surely must appear unconventional even in America, is in the end no stranger than the rites which it replaces, where the young woman, dressed as a bride, perhaps even in her mother's wedding dress, assumes the veil to the chanting of "Veni Sponsa Christi". At least the new rites, for all their artificiality, offer women a role other than that of wife or servant. Perhaps it is in this revised capacity that the Church itself should learn to recognize its future women saints.

GOING HOME

Freny Olbrich

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Provision and self-denial

Dana Breen

SUSIE ORBACH
Hunger Strike: The anorectic's struggle as a metaphor for our age
201pp. Faber. £9.95.
0 571 13682 6

In *Hunger Strike* Susie Orbach turns her attention to anorexia nervosa – or to be more precise, to anorexia nervosa as suffered by women, for she does not consider the less common phenomenon of male anorectics. Anorectics, she reminds us, do not simply lose their appetites (the literal meaning of the word); they overcome their desire for food. So, encouraging or forcing an anorectic woman to eat is useless in itself; the meaning of the symptom must be investigated.

Orbach tackles the two sides of the problem: the relationship of the anorectic to food and to the body. She argues that there are two cultural imperatives imposed on women: to be attractive by making their bodies conform to the ideal of the day, and to feed others while restraining their own desires for the same food. By becoming emaciated, the anorectic caricatures the stereotype of ideal womanhood, while remaining in charge of herself. To Orbach, "anorexia is at once an embodiment of stereotyped femininity and its very opposite"; it is both the acceptance and the refusal of the culturally defined role.

Since the 1940s, values and fashions in child-rearing practices have shifted rapidly, and Orbach suggests that anorexia symbolizes a search for certainty and order in the face of the insecure structure of parenthood in recent decades. These shifts have occurred in a patriarchal culture preoccupied with an abundance of food, coupled with a need for girls and women to deprive themselves of it. Mothers, Orbach says, transmit negative feelings about being female to their daughters, and teach them to deny their own needs while providing for others.

Orbach points to the importance of childhood relationships, particularly of that between mother and daughter, but she considers them mainly in terms of the transmission of cultural prescripts. Primarily, she wants to give a political analysis of anorexia, as the title of her book, *Hunger Strike*, indicates. The anorectic response, she says, "is an inchoate political protest".

Her clinical descriptions are poignant, and highlight the anorectic's terror of her dependence on others. She argues that a clinical approach to anorexia must aim to understand a woman's despair, and her need to resort to such an extreme response, rather than just trying to fatten her up. From her descriptions, it appears that Orbach sees therapy developing through discussion of the eating problem itself. I believe that it is more important to work on how the relationship between therapist and patient is inevitably structured as an anorectic one, that is, the patient will find accepting help from her therapist to be frightening, dangerous, fattening, painful and humiliating. In fact, anorectics usually do not see their anorexia as a problem: it can be a long time before the question of food can be tackled head on. The anorectic's need to be understood and accepted may be the only thing that can keep the therapy going.

Orbach's socio-political analysis does little to illuminate her clinical descriptions. In her experience of anorectics, fear of femininity and adulthood is not due to inability to accept a culturally defined notion of femininity, but arises because of problems with the more general human condition of having to negotiate inequality, comparison with others, and progression through the life cycle – which for girls involves developing a body like their mothers'.

A large part of Orbach's argument rests on her claim that there has been a dramatic rise in the incidence of anorexia nervosa. But even A. H. Crisp, whose study she quotes to support her case, acknowledges that anorexia has not always been easy to diagnose, and only concludes that it is "probably" getting more common. In he past, for instance, I think young women who would now be diagnosed as anorectic may have been thought to be "wasting away" of some unknown ailment. Be that as it may, this book offers a much-needed antidote to the unsympathetic views often aroused by anorexia nervosa.

Anorexia nervosa, lesbians, nuns, Catherine of Siena and other saints, and virginity in theology all feature in the index to *Women's Studies: A bibliography of dissertations 1870–1982* compiled by V. F. Gilbert and D. S. Tatla (456pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £57.50. 0 631 13714 9), which lists and arranges under twenty-three main categories over 12,000 unpublished dissertations located in American, British and Irish universities.

Experts in expedients

Adrian Lyttelton

JOHN HAYCRAFT
Italian Labyrinth: Italy in the 1980s
314pp. Secker and Warburg. £12.50.
0436 191377

Conventional categories seem hard to apply to Italy. It is a country whose idiosyncrasies charm but also disturb. Political crises and scandals give the impression of a society on the brink of collapse, but this is contradicted by the remarkable resilience of the economy. John Haycraft, a cosmopolitan Englishman who has run a network of language schools in Italy and elsewhere, has written, in *Italian Labyrinth: Italy in the 1980s*, a book which grapples with these perplexing contrasts. Inevitably, he covers much of the same ground as earlier authors, such as Peter Nichols, whose *Italia, Italia* remains one of the best portraits of the country. While fascinated by continuities, however, Haycraft has a keen sense of the present moment, and this makes his book in many ways fresh and valuable.

The problem with a book of this kind, though, is that it has to cover everything – which means that some subjects are given only superficial treatment. The section on literature is disappointing: Calvino is not even mentioned, and there is little sense of the literary scene as a whole. The discussion of political parties is adequate but not particularly illuminating. But these are topics on which it is quite easy to read other writers. Instead, someone interested in the way things work, or don't work, in Italy, will find Haycraft's book an excellent introduction. He has taken to heart Luigi Barzini's legitimate complaint that foreign writers neglect the subject of bureaucracy, and his description of the workings of Italian administration is pungent and accurate. He compares the Italian government to "a brain in a paralysed body: perhaps imaginative, dramatic and original, but with very little command of muscles and nerve ends". Laws and regulations in Italy seem to have a Platonic kind of existence, as pure form with only a flickering reflection in reality. They make unrealistic claims, which are enforced in a sporadic and arbitrary fashion. The consequence is a vicious circle, in which private and public malpractice reinforce each other. Corruption and the need for political protection are vastly increased by the inefficiencies of the legal system. Apart from the element of sheer delay, and the absurd injustice of a penal system in which prisoners tend to spend more time in prison before sentence than after, the problem is that many laws simply cannot be obeyed. Every other year some whole category of leading citizens is consequently arrested, with great show, and then usually released again. One year it is the heads of savings banks, another year, professors of medicine. Often, they deserve it; but it is impossible not to feel some sympathy for the directors of opera houses who were led away handcuffed because they had committed the grave offence of hiring singers through an agent. What else were they to do? In such circumstances, it is often the relatively honest who suffer most because they lack protection.

The practices of the Italian state and political class have tended to divide Italians into insiders, who have access to special privileges or favours, and can procure them for others, and outsiders who lack even indirect channels of influence. Hence the need that Italians feel for identification with mediating groups, sometimes relatively benevolent, like the mass parties, but sometimes decidedly sinister: the Mafia, the Camorra, the freemasonry of Licio Gelli and the P2. A left-wing socialist, asked why he joined the P2, replied: "Because Italian political life has become a *guerra per bande*" (gang warfare).

About a third of *Italian Labyrinth* is taken up by two chapters, "The Family" and "Broader Families". For good and evil, Haycraft argues, the family is still the model for groups which can undertake effective social action. And this explains the extraordinary success of small businesses, as opposed to the mixed record of large enterprise and the downright disastrous performance of the huge public sector; Romano Prodi, the expert who is now trying to reform IRI (the Istituto Nazionale per la Ricostruzione Industriale), is convinced that the optimum size of firm is smaller in Italy than elsewhere, and that the explanation must be in part psychological. This is not an expression of rampant individualism, but rather of a preference for flexible co-operation between small independent units over institutionalized hierarchies. There has been a kind of leap from the traditional to the post-industrial. It is perhaps no accident that the "third Italy" of recently industrialized regions like Emilia-Romagna, Tuscany, the Marche and parts of the Veneto, where small industry is most vital, is also the area characterized in the past by large, multiple peasant households. Of course, there is a darker side to these successes. The "black" or "submerged" economy has been the most striking among the unintended consequences of state action. Many workers as a result do not enjoy the benefits of minimum wages and social security; there are, though, cases in which "black social security" exists as well. It is, of course, cheaper and more efficient than the official system.

It is really impossible to say how much in these patterns stems from a positive preference for the small and informal over the large and institutional, and how much instead from distrust and the necessity for self-protection. Again, the two motives strengthen each other. But Haycraft is right to argue that Italians should be assessed according to their own values, and not according to abstract foreign standards. A preference for the personal and the informal militates against stable role expectations and gives to much of Italian life the exhausting quality of a perpetual negotiation. On the other hand it also helps to preserve humanity, intimacy and originality.

The catchword for Italy in the 1980s is the *riflusso* (ebb). Certainly, after the dramatic upheavals of the 1970s, there has been a retreat from politics. The political debate is still lively and of high quality; but the danger that the audience will lose interest is growing. Scepticism about the possibility of real social and political change has spread even to the younger generations. The return to private life was in a certain sense prefigured in some features of 1968 radicalism, with its insistence that "the personal is political". The changes in morality and custom have been remarkable. The position of women, for example, has changed dramatically. The decline of militant feminism, unlike that of other left-wing movements, is in part due to its very successes. The consumer society is in full swing; in retrospect, one of the most important events in Italy in the late 1970s was the decision to allow private television. The entrepreneur of Canale 5, Silvio Berlusconi (a friend of Prime Minister Bettino Craxi) may be the most representative figure of the early 1980s. But, as even this example suggests, the boundaries between private and public life are not quite the same as in other countries. Italy is a very competitive society, but much of the competition takes place for shares of public expenditure. Craxi and the Socialist party have proclaimed themselves the representatives of the *ceti emergenti* (emerging middle classes); and they have gone out of their way to recruit personalities who symbolize the new roads to success in fashion and show business. But an unkind critic objected that the core of their support comes from the *ceti rampanti* (climbers), who use politics for personal advancement.

In many ways, the most important cleavage in Italian life is no longer between classes but between the *garantiti* and the *emarginati* (insiders and outsiders again). The latter include a particularly high proportion of young people. Psychologically, the effects of terrorism and the fears and suspicions it engendered have been devastating for a whole generation. Haycraft is right to point out that once again Italian resourcefulness and talent for expedients has reduced the damage done by unemployment. But this is still severe, and the perennial housing crisis is another fact which prevents many people from feeling that they have a stake in society. It would be rash to assume, as some fashionable commentators tend to do, that the hegemony of "reformism" and/or free enterprise is now assured. Italian society has a great capacity for self-regeneration, and there seem to be more reasons for optimism about Italy's future than about Britain's. But there is a growing feeling that in a harsher economic climate the mode of operation of the Italian state is a luxury which can no longer be afforded. While so many political and social problems remain unsolved, it would be rash to predict a continuation of the relative calm of the last years.

The diversity of Italy makes for both fascination and unpredictability. For the curious, John Haycraft's book offers the chance to begin to acquire the capacity for educated guesswork which is all that anyone can achieve.

M. Nizzoli's design for the Olivetti Lexicon 80 typewriter (1948). It is reproduced from Modern Italy: Images and history of a national identity; Volume Three: War, Postwar, Reconstruction, Take-off, *edited by Franca Sironi (555pp. Milan: Electa. £60).*

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Firepower or shock action?

Michael Carver

HEW STRACHAN
From Waterloo to Balaclava: Tactics, technology, and the British army, 1815–1854
188pp. Cambridge University Press. £19.50.
0 521 30439 3

The British army's history from Waterloo to Balaclava is generally thought of as one of stagnation, if not retrogression, under the combined influences of a parsimonious Treasury and the stultifying conservatism of the Duke of Wellington, who was Commander-in-Chief for most of the period, when he was not Prime Minister. In a previous book (*Wellington's Legacy: The reform of the British army 1830–1854*, 1984), Hew Strachan, although recognizing the conservative pressures, attempted to counterbalance this view, emphasizing the influence of military journals and of the heirs of the light infantry trained by Sir John Moore at Shorncliffe. In that book he stressed that, although the army saw no action on the continent of Europe between 1815 and 1854, it was permanently engaged elsewhere, principally in India and South Africa.

In the present slim (but expensive) volume, Strachan pursues the same theme, giving a detailed, intensively researched account of the technical changes in weapons and their effect on the tactics, and, to a certain extent, the organization of infantry, cavalry and artillery. He is a master of detail, but does not get lost in it, and the clarity of his exposition illumines the realities of the battlefield, so that what, in many accounts, often seems a meaningless muddle emerges as a rational employment of men, horses and weapons.

There were only two forms of firepower: the musket, which was developing into the rifle, and the cannon, which had started life as a fortress or siege weapon and, at least by the British, was still often thought of as such. The pistol and the carbine were irrelevant to the main clash of arms. The most significant development was the transformation of the musket into the rifle, which had not been entirely completed by the end of the period. Strachan explains clearly the effect which this had on both infantry and cavalry tactics and organization, and the forces which resisted the change.

In the case of infantry, the argument was fundamentally between those who favoured a greater emphasis on, if not a complete change to light infantry, relying on the firepower of their improved muskets, or preferably rifles, and movement in small bodies of men; and those who believed that, in the last resort, it was the actual shock of men moving forward with cold steel in the form of bayonets which decided the issue; and that in defence a solid mass of men, delivering volleys of fire, was essential to hold ground against a determined assault, especially by cavalry. The need for the cold steel to have a long handle in order to deal with mounted troops was an important influence on the resistance to adopting a shorter, lighter musket or rifle.

The same argument in a different form split the cavalry. Waterloo appeared to have proved that the cavalry could not prevail against infantry formed into squares, and that therefore they should abandon the function of shock troops on the battlefield in favour of a light cavalry role, to which several regiments had been converted in the Peninsula in imitation of Napoleon's Polish and Hungarian cavalry, whose dress they copied. But the heavy dragoon element was not prepared to accept that, and the battles of Sobraon and Aliwal against the Sikhs in 1846 lent support to their view, the lance having been adopted for that purpose, although there was a strong school who continued to favour the sword. Within that school there was argument about whether to cut or thrust or to try and do both. Since Cromwell's day, the attempt to give the horseman a firearm had always proved unsatisfactory. Except on light cavalry duties, such as scouting or picketing – the original task of the dragoon – a firearm for self-defence was only an embarrassment on the battlefield. The cavalry proper resented being relegated to a mounted infantry role and could not bring themselves to abandon the charge, the execution of which, including deciding the critical moment at which to launch it, was deemed to justify the "cavalry spirit", for which mounted sports were believed to be the best training. But as the rifle replaced the musket and artillery improved in range, accuracy and lethality, the chances of delivering a successful charge against an enemy equipped with these weapons became slimmer and slimmer. It did not need the machine-gun to bring that about; yet there was still a corps of three cavalry divisions in the British army in France in 1918 and horsed cavalry was still in service in 1939.

Artillery in the period suffered from two handicaps. The first was the subordinate role Wellington had always given it; he generally placed it on the flanks of his infantry, being reluctant to use it, as Frederick the Great had done, as a principal element in a battlefield attack, but rather concentrating it at the main point of effort and on the enemy's own artillery. This was partly because, in the Peninsula, Wellington was usually on the defensive. The other handicap was the demand for guns to defend ports and fortresses. The system of promotion for officers in the Royal Regiment of Artillery did not help overcome these problems. As in the Royal Engineers, this was not by purchase but, theoretically, on merit: in fact it took place by seniority, which was synonymous with senility. A refreshing upsurge of interest and modernization occurred towards the end of the period in February 1852 when Lord Hardinge became Master General of the Ordnance, and succeeded Wellington as Commander-in-Chief. The experimental range at Shoeburyness, still in use, dates from these years.

Strachan's book is a valuable and revealing contribution to military history. Perhaps its most fascinating aspect is that many of the controversies, tactical, technical and organizational, which he discusses still continue in the army of today, particularly as to the balance of emphasis between firepower and shock action. It was the arrival of the infantry with hand-grenades and bayonets at the end of their rifles into the Argentine positions round Port Stanley that clinched matters there a few years ago. Firepower by itself is not enough to bring the enemy either to leave the ground one wishes to gain for oneself or to surrender: it must be accompanied by movement of the soldier, in a land, sea or aerial vehicle or on his feet, to displace the enemy physically.

Spoiling for a fight

John Ure

NORMAN RICH
Why the Crimean War?: A cautionary tale
258pp. University Press of New England; distributed in the UK by Trevor Brown Associates. £17.25.
0 874513 286

Thirty years ago Cecil Woodham-Smith achieved an instant success with her analysis of the causes of the charge of the Light Brigade at Balaclava: *The Reason Why* exposed the military follies, vanities and personal aberrations which had led to that spectacular disaster. Now Norman Rich has written an analysis of the political and diplomatic blunders which led up to the Crimean War as a whole – of which the ill-fated charge was only the most memorable piece of mismanagement. The politicians and diplomats, he explains, were every bit as blinkered and bigoted as their military counterparts – Lords Raglan, Lucan and Cardigan. Indeed, the persistence with which the European powers pursued a course dedicated to their own undoing was so striking that it might have warranted a chapter in Barbara Tuchman's recent study of such self-destroying endeavours, *The March of Folly*.

In their different ways, the rulers of all the major European powers – Britain, France, Austria and Russian – had good reason to wish to preserve the peaceful Concert of Europe which had characterized the forty years after the Congress of Vienna and the termination of the Napoleonic wars. The Concert had been a bulwark which had enabled its members to survive – more or less intact – the upheavals and revolutions of 1848. Only the tottering Habsburg empire appeared to realize this. So when the even more tottering Ottoman empire of the Sultan appeared threatened by tsarist Russian protection of the Orthodox Christian minorities in Turkey and the Balkans, and when the other European powers felt themselves threatened by potential Russian expansionism, there was little evidence of that self-preserving instinct for peace which might have been expected in the chancelleries of London, Paris and St Petersburg.

In London, Lord Aberdeen's administration allowed itself to be influenced by Lord Palmerston and the British press, both of which bellicose bodies were passionate opponents of Russia, as were such diverse contemporary figures as Charles Kingsley and Karl Marx. In Paris, Napoleon III thought that an end to the Concert of Europe would free his hands for more ambitious and expansionist policies. In St Petersburg, the Tsar saw no reason to act with caution in pressing his demands, and sent his most arrogant emissary – Prince Menshikov – to browbeat the Sultan.

But if Menshikov's personality was uncompromising, that of the British envoy at the Sublime Porte was even more so. Stratford Canning, Viscount Stratford de Redcliffe, had a deep personal antagonism to the Tsar, who he (rightly) considered had frustrated his career by refusing to accept him as British ambassador at St Petersburg, on the very understandable grounds that he was already too hostile. Stratford de Redcliffe in fact committed the cardinal diplomatic sin: according to his French colleague "he obeyed his instructions, and called upon the Ottoman government to accept [the Russian proposals]; but he let it be seen at the same time that his private opinion was at variance with his official language".

Curiously, the one person who seems to have realized how dangerous Stratford de Redcliffe's hatred of the Russians and unscrupulous personal diplomacy were becoming was Queen Victoria herself. She wrote with characteristic directness to her Foreign Secretary commenting that Stratford's letters "exhibit clearly a *desire* for war, and to drag us into it . . . it becomes a serious question whether we are justified in allowing Lord Stratford any longer to remain in a situation which gives him the means of frustrating all our efforts for peace".

But it was all to no avail. Ultimatum followed ultimatum; fleet movements followed fleet movements. Sebastopol was identified as "the eye tooth of the Bear which must be drawn". War there was to be, and war of a particularly bloody, pointless and inconclusive sort. When it was eventually ended, after protracted peace negotiations, none of the great powers had gained. The stability of Europe, like the tens of thousands who lay buried near Sebastopol, had been a casualty of the war. Almost immediately the new groupings in Italy were to undermine the Habsburg empire; very soon thereafter, the new groupings in Germany were to threaten France. The Russian theatre remained, and Britain was to be increasingly agitated by tsarist expansionist policies into the Muslim world, be it into the Ottoman empire or into the emirates of Central Asia.

Professor Rich takes the reader through this sorry tale with the confident authority of a historian in full mastery of his material. He does not lay claim to original research, but presents his study as one of synthesis and interpretation. He is preoccupied with the relevance of these events to those of the present: the inappropriate responses of nineteenth-century statesmen to their concern about the expansion of Russia leads him to subtitle his book "A cautionary tale". And so it is.

Summaries of change

P. K. O'Brien

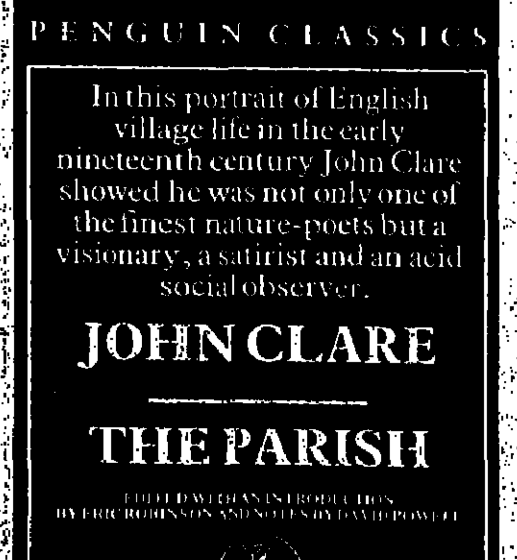
NORMAN J. G. POUNDS
An Historical Geography of Europe 1800–1914
598pp. Cambridge University Press. £45.
0 521 265746

Norman Pounds's three historical geographies of Europe cover a time span from 450 BC to 1914. He reads almost all European languages, Romance, Germanic and Slavonic, and is well acquainted with a wide range of ancillary disciplines including soil science, climatology, topography, civil engineering, industrial technology, chemistry, political, economic and social history.

Professor Pounds clearly intends this volume to follow directly upon his previous book, *An Historical Geography of Europe: 1500–1840* (reviewed in the *TLS* of July 25, 1980), which ended with a geographical survey of Europe at the beginning of the Industrial Revolution. Indeed it would be useful for students to read the final chapters of both books sequentially in order to obtain an overview of how Europe's economy and society had been transformed over the century from Waterloo to the First World War.

In between Pounds offers them a book designed, in his words, to trace "the changing spatial pattern of the main categories of human activity". By that he means there are chapters on Europe's resources, population, urban development, agriculture, industry, internal trade and transport, organized under country-wide and regional headings. The information extracted from an astonishing range of secondary sources is dense and well presented. Students and scholars of European history will appreciate the book's encyclopaedic qualities and use it gratefully as their first port of call for a generation to come.

As a work of reference bounded by the limits of time, space, topic and method established by its author, this text in historical geography stands above reproach. But if modern historians search for explanations of why economic change occurred and where and when it did so, they are likely to be disappointed. The temptation (irresistible for geographers) to explain too much in terms of endowments of energy and minerals, soil and sunshine, rivers and plains has not been resisted and the author's proclivity to derogate human and institutional factors as random and irrational will irritate social scientists. Apart from Pounds's rather uncritical use of the dubious estimates for national product now available, the revolutions in new economic history or in comparative history seem to have passed him by. Professor Pounds has stuck to the methods of his graduate training. His European economy, moving rapidly after 1815 towards the mass affluence of the twentieth century, emerges as a localized and multifarious phenomenon encapsulated in statistics and maps but difficult to explain at anything wider than a regional level of generalization, or to account for in terms of anything more exciting than another summary of the facts. Perhaps in their wisdom this is all that geographers and historians should do? But must they, after years immersed in scholarship, abandon the field to their more facile colleagues in other disciplines?



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THE PARISH
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014.3242 6

Finding the meaning of modernity

Richard Altick

A. DWIGHT CULLER
The Victorian Mirror of History
320pp. Yale University Press. £22.50.
0 300 034520

If it isn't quite true that the Victorian age was the first to seek a usable past – as Dwight Culler reminds us, eighteenth-century philosophers and poets invoked the Augustan age of Rome as a measure of their own civilization – it was the first to be so persistently, even compulsively, anxious to fix its position in the long stream of history. No preceding society had been so self-conscious; indeed, the Victorians were the first large modern community to suffer an identity crisis. Who and what are we? they constantly found themselves wondering. How do our great achievements compare with those of past ages? How can our various interpretations of the pattern of historical flow enable us to forecast our future?

These were the formidable and often troubling questions the dozen Victorian sages and poets who are reconsidered in *The Victorian Mirror of History* sought to answer as their society coped simultaneously with the consequences of two unprecedented revolutions, one that was inexorably converting England into a democratic state and another that was transforming it into an urban, industrialized society. A leading cliché of the time held that it was "an age of transition"; every epoch that falls short of absolute stagnation is of course in some kind of transition, but the Victorians' awareness of Heraclitan flux was, for good reasons, more acute. Nor was it surprising that a familiar buzz-phrase, especially in the century's first decades, was "the spirit of the age", a term eventually translated into Matthew Arnold's "Zeitgeist". To isolate the peculiar if not unique properties of modernity, itself a connotation-laden word that might be uttered either with pride or repugnance, was the first step toward resolving the identity crisis. And to take a wide view of history, irrespective of whatever message might be read from it, had a liberalizing effect, counteracting the chronological parochialism inherent in the new, indifferently educated middle-class culture.

Learning what the Victorians saw when they confronted a past age, and what they did with what they saw, has been a notably fruitful occupation of recent scholarship. The Greek influence on Victorian thought, literature, and art has been described in complementary books, Richard Jenkyns's *The Victorians and Ancient Greece* and Frank Turner's *The Greek Heritage in Victorian Britain*. Mark Girouard's colourful *The Return to Camelot: Chivalry and the English gentleman* is an illuminating contribution to the study of Victorian medievalism which may be said to have been initiated nearly sixty years ago by Kenneth Clark's *The Gothic Revival*. The impact of the Renaissance, which replaced the Middle Ages as the dominant past era in public consciousness in the latter half of the century, has not yet been examined in equally wide-ranging books.

The Victorians scrutinized the past not in a single mirror but in a number of them, some providing a view sweeping from earliest antiquity to the present while others were confined to particular periods. What they beheld in the panoramic view was largely determined by the several philosophies of history they had inherited from the eighteenth century or shaped in their own speculations. History assumed a number of dynamic forms: a steady rectilinear development that might be interpreted as euphorically progressive (Macaulay) or leading to a bleak dead end (Thomas Arnold), or as some kind of cyclical or dialectic movement in which creativity alternated with criticism (Carlyle) or expansion with concentration (Matthew Arnold).

The past served several immediate needs. Victorians whose legacy from the preceding generation included idealized conceptions of Ancient Greece or the Middle Ages seized on it as an escapist refuge from the smoke-clouded present. More pragmatically, history retained the didactic role traditionally attributed to it. In the words of the Tudor chronicler Richard Grafton, it was "a glass to see things past, whereby to judge justly of things present and wisely of things to come". It contained models of an ideal society, standards by which the accomplishments and ambitions of contemporary England could be assessed, and events and situations in the earlier experience of civilized humanity which, if rightly understood, could be applied to supposedly analogous ones in the present. As a historian and teacher of the classics, Thomas Arnold insisted on the constant usefulness of ancient parallels in solving modern economic and social issues; the Roman agrarian laws, for instance, pointed the way toward rectifying the evil results of the enclosure system and the entailing of estates. Within a few years of each other, Carlyle and Macaulay made extended applications of the then-and-now technique employed by Augustus Welby Pugin in his pictorial *Contrasts* (of buildings in medieval and modern England) and, prospectively, by novelists like Thackeray and George Eliot and poets like Arnold in "The Scholar Gypsy". Macaulay compared the England of the day point by point with the England of 1685, to the former's almost total advantage, and Carlyle found in an obscure chronicler's description of life in a twelfth-century Benedictine monastery in Suffolk a microcosmic model for universal social and spiritual regeneration. Political lessons for the time of Peel and Palmerston could be derived from paintings of events in the Cromwell era that drew crowds at the summer exhibition. The parallels were so striking that as late as 1870 the cautious William Stubbs recommended that undergraduates should not be taught seventeenth-century political history because it bore too disturbing a resemblance to contemporary politics.

Different as they were in temperament and bent of mind, the men who looked to history for guidance and inspiration heard different messages from the same past age. To Carlyle, who knew less about the Middle Ages than some of his peers, the medieval world was a simple organic society; to Ruskin, who inferred more than he should have done from the evidence of cathedral architecture, they were an age of faith; to Rossetti, the prey of frustrated eroticism, they constituted "a decadent society preoccupied with love"; to William Morris, they were none of the foregoing but a prefiguration of the placid, fulfilled life to which the commonalty could be restored after the revolutionary eradication of capitalism and the factory system.

Professor Culler doubts that the Victorians' intent scrutiny of history, thus compromised by wishful thinking of one sort or another, produced any helpful answers to their problems. But that is not his concern in this judicious and gracefully written book. Its theme, instead, is announced early on in the archetypal figure of Scott's Waverley, "a young man who grows up, achieves clarity of vision, and becomes the master of his own soul" at the same time as the nation "goes through an exactly comparable process". Most of the chapters comprise, in effect, a series of miniature *Bildungsromane*. As young men, Carlyle, John Stuart Mill, Newman, Matthew Arnold, Ruskin and Pater embark on truth-seeking quests which are both intellectual and emotional, and in the course of learning the nature and limitations of history discover also the nature and limitations of their private selves. It is a faint reflection of the biogenetic idea of recapitulation: the phases of these men's personal growth, Culler argues, were analogous to the successive periods of a historical cycle, and moments of private crisis coincided with public ones. The two great events of 1832–3 (the passage of the Reform Bill and the emergence of the Oxford Movement) had a crucial influence on Mill, Carlyle, Newman and Thomas Arnold, and that of 1848 (the peaking of the Chartist threat and wide-

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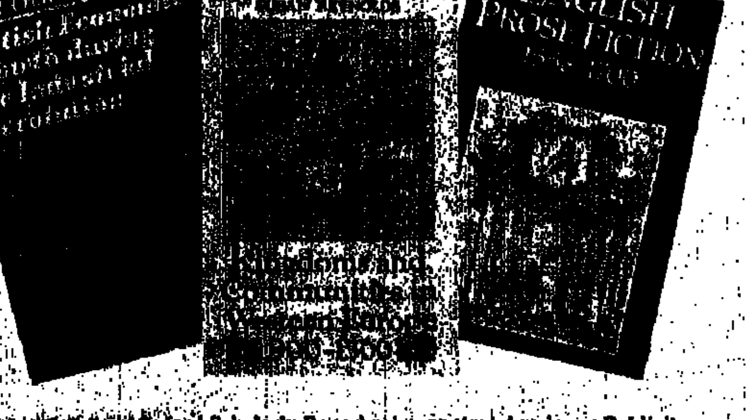

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spread revolution abroad) on Ruskin.

> The "conversions" of Carlyle, Mill, and Arnold, the slow development of Newman, and the flip-flops of Ruskin correspond too closely to their visions of history for us to think the relation is accidental. By far the most persuasive paradigm in the nineteenth century is the parallel between the life of the individual and the life-cycle of civilizations. Both were expressions of the deep-seated organicism of the age, and the discovery of the parallel was often the means whereby the individual overcame his alienation and reconciled himself with the world.

This is a large claim, forcefully presented. Although it is supported by many biographical particulars and apt quotations from the writers themselves, some readers may find it more suggestive than finally convincing. Culler has not always resisted the temptation to which, on his own showing, philosophic historians sometimes succumbed – the lure of the incomplete or specious parallel.

Some of the expository paths Culler follows have been trodden by earlier writers, though for different purposes, and at some places the biographical narrative, however essential to his purpose, has a potted flavour. The sense of *déjà vu* is inescapable as we read, once more, of Carlyle's and Mill's spiritual odysseys and their respective epiphanies in the Rue de St Thomas de l'Enfer (Leith Walk) and the pages of Marmontel's *Mémoires*. On the other hand, in writing of Newman and the Oxford Counter-Reformation Culler assumes that his reader has a surer grasp of the recondite sophistications of Church history than is common among those who have not benefited from his masterly book on Newman, published thirty years ago. And, though much is given, some is withheld. One misses a preliminary chapter on historicism among the Victorians' Romantic precursors, who also were given to adopting, and once in a while parodying, the analogic method. Culler could have written a lively paragraph or two, quite pertinent to his theme, on Thomas Love Peacock's serio-comic application of the stock historicist notion of the four ages – iron, gold, silver and brass – to literary history.

The lasting value of *The Victorian Mirror of History* is not contingent on unqualified acceptance of its leading idea. The chapters can also be read as free-standing critical and interpretative essays, centring on the historical dimension but reaching beyond it – or, to put it in another way, demonstrating how wide that dimension is in a given author's thought and art. By placing a number of more or less familiar Victorian literary careers side by side and bathing them in a common light, Culler not only harmonizes them but brings their individual significances into sharper focus and greater prominence. (This is least true, perhaps, of his pages on Morris.) In the chapter devoted to that much-canvassed topic, Browning's consuming interest in the past and especially the Renaissance, there is nothing remarkably new, but a number of incidental observations can be profitably fitted into crevices in the existing mass of Browning criticism.

Elsewhere, the fresh contributions are larger: those on the continuity of Carlyle's "historical myth"; the decisive role of Barthold Niebuhr and Vico on Thomas Arnold's philosophy of history; the manner in which Newman's *Essay on Development* "applied to the subject of church doctrine the language, concepts, and illustrations of biological evolution, only stopping short of the transmutation of species"; the way that history provided the bridge by which Ruskin proceeded from an ideal of art to an ideal of society; the influence of Marcus Aurelius on Walter Pater; and the place, in the Victorian structure of symbolism, of such "representative men" as Cromwell, Savonarola, Lucretius, King Arthur and Raphael (who, Culler suggests, was to the Pre-Raphaelites "simply the analogue and ancestor of Sir Joshua Reynolds").

Whether or not the perplexed philosopher or poet discovered his soul in the glass of history, Professor Culler leaves no doubt that the age's exploration of the past was the means by which it achieved a substantial measure of self-knowledge, even though its identity crisis was never wholly resolved. He sums up:

> It read history for its bearing upon the present, but in the course of reading history it educated itself and so was better prepared to offer new, creative solutions of its own. Indeed, in the course of looking to the past it became conscious of the distinctive characteristics of the present . . . . It was by the process of searching through the past for analogies to its own situation and becoming aware that there was a certain sense in which Thucydides, Lucretius, and Botticelli were "modern," whereas Herodotus, Cicero, and Raphael were not, that the Victorians became conscious of the true meaning of modernity and of the characteristics of their own age.

If we, in our turn, appeal to the wisdom of parallels, can so much be said for *our* reading of history?

The Norman world remapped

W. L. Warren

MARJORIE CHIBNALL
Anglo-Norman England 1066–1166
240pp. Oxford: Blackwell. £19.50.
0 631 13234 1
HENRY MAYR-HARTING and R. I. MOORE
(Editors)
Studies in Medieval History Presented to
R. H. C. Davis
313pp. Hambledon Press. £20.
0 907628 68 0

It is a commonplace that each generation rewrites history to reflect its own interests. So it is not surprising that, for example, the Norman Conquest is not currently seen as a "disaster" for English culture but as bridging the Channel to a European community in an exciting phase of radical change, nor that a genealogical approach to Anglo-Norman family history has nowadays given way to the sociological. But changing the questions cannot alone account for the transformation of Anglo-Norman history in recent years. The commemoration in 1966 of the 900th anniversary of the Norman invasion stimulated an interest which has since been fostered by annual conferences at Battle Abbey and sustained by numerous young scholars then embarking on research and subsequently finding posts in still expanding universities. The consequence has been to contradict many assumptions confidently made twenty years ago and markedly to shift our perspectives and perceptions of a century of Norman rule.

First, some dauntless research into the ill-attested history of Normandy before 1066 has revealed that it was somewhat less primitive administratively and much less advanced feudally than we had supposed. The methods which Duke William had recently found useful in dominating a restless duchy were the methods to be used in subduing a rebellious kingdom; but feudal institutions were not imported ready-made, they were fashioned on English soil over more than a generation. Second, the field of view has shifted from the England of Domesday Book to the whole of a "Norman empire" established by the Conqueror's sons and full of significance for the interaction of politics and government. Moreover, studies of the Normans in the far north of England, in Scotland and in Wales have cast a revealing light on the processes of colonization and control. The Norman conquest and settlement look very different in the perspective of the borderlands and in that of the Home Counties. Third, the crucial importance of the long reign of Henry I in the forging of a distinctively Anglo-Norman realm has at last been adequately illuminated. There has never yet been a book on the reign, but one is now imminent from Warren Hollister of the University of California, and in the meantime he and his research students have propelled a shoal of revisionist articles across the learned journals.

In addition to changes of perspective there has been much long-overdue editing and re-editing of essential texts, much raking over of fallow plots, infilling of gaps and mining of new seams of evidence. Not only British and American but also French and latterly German scholars have been involved. The significance of it all has not been easy to comprehend, but help is now at hand: Marjorie Chibnall has produced a concise conspectus which makes twenty years of historical research both accessible and intelligible to the general reader. Students, too, will seize upon it gleefully as a labour-saving aid, though it is worth reading the numerous learned articles to which she refers if only to appreciate the extraordinary skill with which she has caught the essence of a piece of research in a paragraph, a sentence, or even a phrase.

Her book is by turns a digest, a review and a commentary given shape and purpose by having as its objective to explain the formation of "an Anglo-Norman culture and society". It is not the kind of book which rests on story-telling and anecdote, and even William Rufus's homosexuality is curiously passed over as "thirteen years of celibate rule"; but it has a richness of detail unusual in a synoptic survey. The author has a keen eye for a telling piece of information: Robert of Bellême, we are told, imported horses from Spain to breed on his Shropshire estates to supply the want of warhorses in England; and the familiar evidence of the damage wrought in English towns by castle-building is counterbalanced by the less familiar information that at Bury St Edmunds 342 houses were built between 1066 and 1086 on former arable land.

The skill mutes criticism; but it has to be said that it is all so judicious and even-handed as to give the impression that there is now a bland consensus about contentious issues. In fact, the new history is hardly less debatable than the old. What, for example, are presented as intelligent "experiments" to improve administrative efficiency might be seen as jury-rigged repairs to a tottering Anglo-Saxon structure; and the current buzz-phrase of "administrative kingship" sanitizes what was still basically a predatory if somewhat more systematic management of the king's prerogatives. So nearly, however, is the book irreproachable that it is a relief to find that the author has a few blind spots: she overlooks the political and fiscal importance of the English coinage; she ignores trenchant criticism of the concept of a "royal demesne"; she has missed the real significance of the collapse of the old communal methods for dealing with crime and their replacement by a bitterly resented system of official prosecution; and she cherishes the antiquated notion that castles "commanded" territory and that Lincoln "dominated the route to the north". But these are carping criticisms of a splendid achievement. It is as if what twenty years ago was a set of sailing directions to a few prominent harbours has been replaced by an Admiralty chart with the depths plumbed, the sandbanks contoured, the coastline delineated and the topography of the hinterland made plain.

Coincidentally there appears a *Festschrift* for Ralph Davis, who has done more to excite interest in Norman England than any other living scholar. He is adept at making any historical inquiry read like a detective story, and at posing simple questions which demand intricately thoughtful answers, such as "Who were the Normans?" and "What made the Norman conquest so complete?" His is the kind of history that makes one wonder why no one saw it that way before. His career has taken him from being a schoolmaster at Christ's Hospital to a lectureship at University College London, a fellowship at Merton College, Oxford, the Chair of Medieval History at Birmingham and the presidency of the Historical Association. His facility for making firm friends, as well as enlisting devoted admirers, has prevented the editors of this tribute from confining it to a central theme. It ranges from Byzantine porridge to Renaissance politics, but with a core of essays on the Norman world. It is none the worse for being a pot-pourri, for every one of its twenty-one essays is of uncommon excellence and readability. It is a volume which will be cited by professional historians for many years to come, but which is also a beguiling bedside book for anyone interested in history.

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A. P. FRENCH and P. J. KENNEDY (Editors)
Niels Bohr: A centenary volume
403pp. Harvard University Press. £16.50.
0674 62415 7

The paradox of Niels Bohr is that a man so indecisive in speech could command the respect of the sharpest minds and readiest wits among the disciples who came to Copenhagen to bring about, under his guidance, the great revolution in physics called quantum mechanics. As he wrestled with his thoughts, muttering broken sentences in an almost inaudible tone, great men like Pauli and Landau, who delighted in destroying pretension, listened respectfully. And years later a new generation who would not normally have tolerated such an inept performance, noted their elders' reverence and felt privileged to be in the presence of a legendary greatness.

But they were scientists and understood the magic; not so Churchill. It is almost unbelievable that Cherwell, Anderson and Halifax could have imagined that he, of all people, would have listened patiently to a long-haired academic struggling to find the right words. Yet, being themselves persuaded by Bohr that the peace of the world would best be safeguarded by letting Russia into the secret of the atom bomb before it was even tested, they wrecked the credibility of the idea by arranging a personal meeting. It was not just a failure, Bohr barely escaped being arrested as a traitor. Margaret Gowing, who tells this story, rightly does not over-dramatize the occasion or claim that the course of history would have been otherwise if the meeting had succeeded. As for Bohr, he continued to work for international agreement and in his writing achieved clarity and a persuasive eloquence, had there been any in authority whose minds were still open to persuasion. But the moment, if it ever existed, had passed.

Bohr the public figure was a tragic misfit; the hero of this handsome and splendidly conceived centenary tribute, *Niels Bohr*, is the physicist-philosopher. Every scientist knows about the Bohr atom of 1913, the starting-point for modern atomic physics, whose use on monuments and in advertisements has made the little planetary system, usually distorted into an artistic travesty, the ubiquitous symbol of fundamental research. It has the merit of being representable, unlike its successor in the quantum mechanics of the 1920s. For while an enthusiast for the original atom model might have persuaded himself that such an object was really there, waiting to be seen under a powerful enough microscope, there was never much doubt that the atom of Schroedinger's theory is a mathematical construct and in no sense a true likeness. More than any other, Bohr realized from the start – indeed he seems to have felt the same way all his life, even as a student – that "It is wrong to think that the task of physics is to find out how nature is. Physics concerns what we can say about nature." And his agonized inarticulacy mirrors the difficulty of shedding the language of appearances to find something worth saying on the subject. The successes of modern theoretical physics have given us a technique for correlating observed phenomena with extraordinary precision, but have told us little, if anything, about the nature of things in themselves. It is one of Bohr's achievements to have led us away from the tempting delusion that we understand, while helping us find the means to describe.

In the search he came to attach central importance to the idea he called Complementarity. In physics it is a fairly straightforward expression of the distinction between the processes observed and the model which mathematics analyses. An electron is an indivisible entity – give it the choice between two paths and it will sometimes take one, sometimes the other; never will half an electron appear simultaneously at the end of both. But in analysing the experiment by quantum mechanics the rule is to represent the electron by a wavelike disturbance that divides without difficulty to travel along both paths, like an ocean wave passing along both sides of a harbour mole. No experiment, however, allows one to observe the wave as a thing in itself – it is only an aid towards calculating the relative probabilities that an electron will turn up at various points. The particle and the wave are complementary descriptions, neither complete in itself and never to be used at the same time, but alternately, in making a prediction of the observable outcomes of a given initial state of affairs. This is a corner-stone of what is now known as the Copenhagen interpretation – a powerful influence on physics, whatever worries it brings to the philosopher of science; for it seems never to have been quite precisely formulated, a characteristic Bohr conception, in fact.

Several of the articles comment on Bohr's increasing reliance in later life on complementarity as a descriptive model applying to many diverse problems. Undoubtedly the concept helped him develop his own ideas, but nothing that is written here convinces me that it is one that can safely be borrowed. Everyone uses analogies from what has become familiar in his life and work in order to grope his way through obscurities, and complementarity was Bohr's favourite. In translating it from the world of physics he made of it a private ritual, hardly necessary for stating the conclusion of the argument which others could have reached (and often did) in their own way. Bohr's contribution to general philosophy, which was much less valuable than his physics, lies in the authority which carried his intuitions into the minds of others, not in any communicable method. When all else is forgotten, his memory will live as an inspiring and greatly loved physicist and philosopher of physics, the spiritual father of a generation of genius. This book will help those to whom he is only a name see why he deserves to be so remembered.

Living Comets by Fred Hoyle and Chandra Wickramasinghe (133pp. Unversity College Cardiff Press. £7.95. 0 906649 79 0) has recently been published. The authors maintain, in a detailed argument that comets are of organic composition (rather than inorganic "snowballs"), and that they may transport micro-organisms to earth from outer-space. They conclude that the question "goes beyond astronomy and biology . . . . The issue is cultural".

Finding the right questions

Jorge Calado

RUDOLF PEIERLS
Bird of Passage: Recollections of a physicist
350pp. Guildford: Princeton University Press.
£21.20.
0691 08390 8

For someone who would have liked to have called his autobiography *What Little I Remember*, Rudolf Peierls remembers a great deal. Born in a Berlin suburb in 1907, he was able to participate actively in the revolution which transformed physics during the miraculous decade of 1925–35, and later in the developments which led to the construction of the first atomic bomb. He is not the first – nor will he be the last – to tell the story of these momentous events but, to use the same frankness that Sir Rudolf applies in his letters of recommendation of former students, I confess to a certain disappointment in the outcome. Part of the problem is that he has been blessed with a relatively uneventful and happy life, which no amount of travelling or mingling with famous friends and acquaintances, spiced here and there with a funny joke, can make exciting.

His life is also inextricably linked to the extraordinary progress in physics in the last fifty years, in fields as far apart as solid state theory, quantum electrodynamics, particle theory, nuclear structure and the theory of nuclear reactions, but Professor Peierls is surprisingly reticent about the science. This may be because he believes that "if you try to say something in clear and simple language it will not be quite correct, and if you express the precise truth it will be complicated"; more likely, he is simply avoiding repeating himself, for he is, after all, the successful author of two stimulating books: *The Laws of Nature* (1955) and *Surprises in Theoretical Physics* (1979).

As a student, and later as a brilliant young physicist, Peierls always went after the best. He heard Nernst and Planck in Berlin teaching elementary physics (those were the days when the most senior professors chose to give the introductory courses which attracted big audiences), was enraptured by Sommerfeld's pedagogical ability in Munich, followed Heisenberg to Leipzig and ended up as assistant to Pauli in Zürich (organizing, among other tasks, Pauli's collection of offprints). The pilgrimage did not stop there. Although Pauli told Peierls, "I hope your physics will improve; I am not very satisfied with it", he was sufficiently impressed to recommend him for a Rockefeller fellowship in 1932. This took Peierls to Rome (where Fermi taught) and then Cambridge (where Fowler and Rutherford pontificated). Consciously or not, he was following in the steps of his friend, the physicist Hans Bethe, whom he knew from his Munich days.

Once in England, the bird of passage had come home to roost. He still moved from Cambridge to Manchester, then on to Birmingham and finally to Oxford (not to mention his long stay in Los Alamos during the war), but these were the dampened oscillations of someone who was growing new roots. Peierls became a British citizen in 1940, a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1955, and was awarded a knighthood in the New Year's honours of 1968.

To the general public Peierls is known as the co-author of the famous Frisch–Peierls memorandum (1940) in which, expanding on the idea of a critical mass, it was estimated that a weapon could be built using about a pound of pure uranium-235. They quickly added that since this bomb would probably kill a large number of civilians, "this may make it unsuitable as a weapon for use by this country [England]". However, soon afterwards Peierls was in charge of the British group working in Los Alamos on the "Manhattan District" project. This is described in one of the best chapters of the book. Farrell and others painted an almost sublime picture of the first test of the plutonium bomb in the Alamogordo desert. Peierls impresses us with more mundane things: the sound of the explosion which took about two minutes to reach the observers and even then "was not very impressive, perhaps like the sound of a rifle fired nearby"; or the weary scene of the drive back to Los Alamos, with the heroes of the day looking worn out and depressed, half-asleep on the bus.

Peierls is also very good with his vignettes of the major participants in the project. He describes how ingenious, cool Fermi measured the energy yield of the bomb by dropping a few pieces of paper into the blast wave as it passed, and then watching the distance they were carried; and he remembers Oppenheimer as a man of definite tastes for whom Martinis had to be strong, coffee black and steak rare. Peierls was less perceptive about Klaus Fuchs, whom he befriended and housed in Birmingham, and then took to Los Alamos as a trusted collaborator. The news of Fuchs's arrest as a spy in 1950 came to him as a complete shock.

Peierls is one of the last great physicists who refused to specialize in a narrow field: his interests were always broad and catholic. To him, the truly creative job of the theoretician is "to find the right question to ask of the laws of physics", but he is aware that this "is often more difficult than finding the answer". No wonder Planck used to say to any student who came up to him looking for a research topic: "My dear man, if I knew of a problem, I would solve it myself!" It was also this conundrum that Oppenheimer had in mind when he told *Time* magazine, "What we don't understand, we try to explain to each other." The final word must go to Lady Peierls, who devised a useful categorization of people as "golfers" or "tennis-players". Professor Peierls confesses that he is better at reacting to situations than at creating them, and that his best work in physics was provoked by other people's attempts which seemed to him wrong or misleading. He is definitely a tennis-player.

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Diagnostician of death

P. D. James

TOM TULLETT
Clues to Murder: Forensic murder investigations of Professor J. M. Cameron
227pp. Bodley Head. £12.95.
0 370 30852 2

Tom Tullett has written a straightforward account of some of the most interesting cases of Professor J. M. Cameron of the London Hospital, one of the world's foremost forensic pathologists. Tullett is well qualified for his task. He was formerly the chief of the *Daily Mail* Crime Bureau and has an intimate knowledge of those two fraternities: the law and the underworld. His account is not without the occasional journalistic cliché and the chapter headings read like headlines, but he tells his story with a scrupulous regard for the facts and without attempting to dramatize or embroider narratives which, unadorned, are already sufficiently horrific.

The cases selected are, as might be expected, those in which the work of the forensic pathologist and the forensic scientists was of particular importance either to the detection of the criminal or to his subsequent conviction. The science is, on the whole, more interesting than the villains. The book is a sad recital of human evil as well as human ingenuity in its detection; men whose business is contract killing, who put down a human being as casually as they might an unwanted and dangerous dog, the wife who poisoned her husband with weed-killer in his steak-and-kidney pie because, as she said in her subsequent statement, she "had no intention of going on with the marriage". These modern murderers, when not pathetic, are a violent, callous, stupid and rather uninteresting bunch whose crimes, with a few exceptions, have none of the psychological or sociological interest of the more famous Victorian or Edwardian murders, with their contrast between the respectability and social pretensions of their cluttered drawing-rooms and the violent eruption of murder. But perhaps, in this age of the common man, we are inclined to view even murder with a partial and nostalgic eye. And it is certain that many of these older and more famous cases might have had a different and speedier conclusion had Professor Cameron been present, a careful, skilled, patient and thorough diagnostician of death.

One interesting aspect of the cases is the singular operation of chance in murder as in other areas of human life. One bizarre example is the chapter on the "Teddy Bear Murders", where the leader of a gang of thieves, after a spectacular armed robbery netting more than £500,000, left his car-keys in the public lavatory at Hertford where the gang had changed out of their overalls into the uniforms of a security delivery firm. Seldom if ever can the common misfortune of forgetting the car-keys have had such dramatic and, for the loser, disastrous consequences. The finding of the keys led not only to the solving of the robbery but to the detection of six callous and brutal gang murders. And here, too, chance operated on a smaller but more tragic scale. Terry Brett, the ten-year-old son of one of the victims, jumped into the car just for the ride when his father was being lured away to his death and was shot with him. The murderers gave him a teddy bear to hold before putting the gun to his head, but it would be naive to suppose that they were motivated by anything as human as pity.

One of Professor Cameron's particular interests is in battered babies or, as it is more euphemistically described, non-accidental injury to children, and Tullett includes a chapter on the Maria Colwell case. This, like some of the other cases covered, suffers from the necessary constraints of brevity in a comprehensive book of this kind and it would be unrealistic to expect that the complexities of this difficult subject, or even of this particular case, could be adequately discussed in one short chapter. But to take more than a page in a five-page account in simply detailing the child's bruises, although a powerful stimulus to outrage, does look like page-filling. What are particularly depressing are the two short paragraphs taken from the report of the enquiry into Maria's death, containing criticisms which have become all too familiar through subsequent enquiries into similar tragedies and which show only too clearly how slow we are to learn from our mistakes.

Perhaps the most interesting chapter in the book, and the one with by far the most fascinating defendant (one hesitates now to write "murderess") is the account taken from an address given by Dr Cameron to the Medico-Legal Society in April 1984 on the Australian "Dingo Baby" case, particularly in the light of the reported recent finding of the baby's missing matinée jacket which the mother claimed that her child had been wearing at the time but which the prosecution discounted. It is too early to say whether this new evidence will be sufficient convincingly to overturn the guilty verdict, although Mrs Chamberlain has now been freed from prison and will not be returned there whatever the result of the impending inquiry. But it does seem remarkable that the prosecution's burden of proof was satisfied in a case where there was no body, no weapon, and no apparent motive. If a wild dog did, indeed, take and kill the baby as the mother has always maintained, there are still a number of questions unanswered and the case is likely to remain one of the most fascinating and mysterious in Australian legal history and one which will provide a salutory reminder that even scientific experts are fallible.

All forensic pathologists have a formidable case-load; Professor Cameron performs over 1,300 autopsies a year in addition to his university teaching, lecturing to detective-training courses and acting as expert adviser both at home and overseas. The job itself requires an equally formidable combination of talents; the meticulous skill of a good morbid anatomist, the ability to work effectively with the police, and the physical resilience to accept long and uncertain hours and to work in the field under conditions which can be uncomfortable, unpleasant or even hazardous. In addition, the forensic pathologist must perform well in the witness-box under cross-examination, a place where even the best scientific work can be undone. Tom Tullett, in his introduction, provides a summary of Professor Cameron's career but this book is necessarily more concerned with the job than with the man. Perhaps when Professor Cameron finally puts down his scalpel he will give us an autobiography.

A detail from "The Agnew Clinic" by Thomas Eakins, 1889, reproduced from David M. Lubin's Act of Portrayal *(189pp. Yale University Press. £20. 0 300 03213 7), to be reviewed in a future issue of the* TLS.

Far from foolproof

Roy Porter

THOMAS ROGERS FORBES
Surgeons at the Bailey: English forensic medicine to 1878
255pp. Yale University Press. £20.
0 300 03338 9

For Conan Doyle around the turn of this century, it was Dr Watson who was blind to the clues a corpse offered of whodunnit, and Holmes who knew his pathological anatomy. In making this little joke against himself, Dr Doyle was probably being a bit hard on his profession. For while it might strike us now how little late Victorian forensic medicine could help perplexed detectives, judges and juries in the days before the advent of fingerprinting, blood-groups and foolproof toxicology, forensic specialists were growing rather pleased with their own achievements.

Indeed, as Thomas Rogers Forbes implies in his endlessly fascinating account of the early days of doctors in the witness-box, one of the new entertainments of Victorian London lay in the courtroom drama: how would the expert testimony of the medical men sway a case?

In May 1856, William Palmer, a surgeon, went on trial for the murder of his gambling friend John Parsons Cook. Palmer had huge debts, Cook had winnings. Over some weeks, Cook fell progressively ill with intestinal complaints, generally after eating food or taking medicines prepared by Palmer. Palmer had then treated him. Cook grew worse, requiring further "treatment", until he finally died. Suspected of poisoning Cook with strychnine, Palmer was put on trial. His defence was that Cook had died of disease.

At the trial, no fewer than twenty-four medico-legal experts appeared for the prosecution, including that great society doctor Sir Benjamin Brodie, Sir Robert Christison, Professor of Medical Jurisprudence at Edinburgh, and the greatest performer of autopsies in Britain, Alfred Swaine Taylor. They had to confess that medical science had no foolproof tests for poisons; but when they testified that Cook's symptoms corresponded to no known disease, it took the jury just over an hour to allow themselves to be persuaded by the forensic voice; Palmer was hanged.

But for a long time the forensic witness carried small weight in court, which was hardly surprising. The standards of post-mortems left much to be desired. "Opening a body", Professor Forbes tartly observes, all too often meant just that and no more, and blood samples were dispatched for toxicological analysis with no indication from which part of the corpse they came. Worse still, experts commonly disagreed with each other in court, or simply lost all sense of propriety. Cross-examined in a marriage annulment case as to the wife's sanity, the psychiatrist John Haslam retorted: "I never saw any human being who was of sound mind", adding, gratuitously, that he presumed "the Deity is of sound mind", on the basis of "my own reflections . . . and from repeated conversations with the best divines". Thus public scepticism remained strong, which was just as well, as the doctors were frequently dangerously wrong. Until well into the nineteenth century, forensic textbooks were still teaching that a woman who proved to be pregnant could not have been raped.

Indeed, as Forbes's survey of Old Bailey trials from Tudor times onwards shows, medical expertise came slowly and haltingly. Expert witness of all kinds made its entry late into English courtroom practice, and the medical was no exception. A crucial factor was doubtless the English common law's adversarial mode of judicial proceedings, where the ability of lawyers to blacken or whiten defendants' characters was all important. On the Continent, where, without juries, the inquisitorial system prevailed, the "facts" of the matter counted, and the voice of the experts carried the day. Thus a formal body of medico-legal jurisprudence emerged in sixteenth and seventeenth century Italy, France and Germany, which precolated into court practice and encouraged the emergence of the police surgeon. By contrast, Britain trailed behind. No textbook of legal medicine was written in English until the close of the eighteenth century; the subject wasn't taught at British universities till the careers of Andrew Duncan and Robert Christison in early nineteenth century Edinburgh, and it had a poor start in English universities – John Gordon Smith, the first professor at University College (1829), died in a pauper prison just four years after his appointment. Meanwhile, advances in the subject typically came from abroad. The great researches of John Hunter on gunshot wounds had few successors, and it was the work of the Frenchmen Fodéré and Orfila that finally cracked the poisoners.

The fact is that in Britain, doctors were given no incentive to become forensic experts. The state and the legal profession together denied that medical expertise was needed for the office of coroner. Until the close of the eighteenth century, mad-doctors were rarely called in to judge the sanity of defendants (courts believed this fell within lay competence), and when psychiatrists eventually made their presence felt in the nineteenth century, their testimony often proved – as it does today – counter-productive. In any case, the restrictions placed upon access to cadavers gravely hindered the development of pathology in Britain.

The history of forensic medicine in this country has been grossly neglected. As Forbes would be the first to admit, his is far from the last word. He offers more a chronicle (his word) than an analysis, and he has relied for his chief primary source on the printed *Old Bailey Sessions Papers*, when other material, not least newspapers, would provide new clues to the mysteries. And the reader must beware of a surprising number of silly factual slips (Hans Sloane, born in 1660, turns up founding the Royal Society, which was chartered in 1662). Yet this is a richly rewarding work. Professor Forbes's vignettes afford us yet another example of those conflicts between and within professions, between precedent and science, between expertise and lay distrust, which reveal the peculiarities of the English in the chequered progress of *savoir pouvoir*.

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Leisurely older man

Neil Berry

JOHN WAIN
Dear Shadows: Portraits from memory
186pp. John Murray. £10.95.
0 7195 4284 7

John Wain's publisher once put out a statement informing the world that John Wain was *not* an angry young man. With Lucky Jim and Jimmy Porter, Charles Lumley, the disaffected hero of Wain's first novel *Hurry on Down* (1953), had blurred into the composite British 1950s rebel, and so had Wain himself. The author had reason to feel deprived of his identity. He was in fact, for all his reputation as an iconoclast, a traditional literary moralist in the making – as it happens, a gruff, not to say irascible, one. In *The Angry Decade*, his recently re-issued study of the period, the late Kenneth Allsop accurately dubbed the young John Wain a "trainee Priestley".

Didacticism, together with an unfashionable strain of stoic moralizing, has remained a feature of Wain's fiction and criticism. But though he never wastes a chance to denounce cars and juke-boxes, he has become less strident and touchy over the years. *Dear Shadows*, his latest book, a slim volume of reminiscences, is mostly free from the breast-beating of *Sprightly Running*, the substantial instalment of autobiography taking his life up to the age of thirty-five, that he published in 1962. There Wain expatiated on his brutal childhood in Stoke-on-Trent, on his days at Oxford as a devotee of C. S. Lewis and on how, latterly, he had embraced the noble calling of authorship.

It would be an odd reader who felt no temptation to regard the book as an essay in egomania. In the present volume, the title of which he takes from Yeats's elegy "In Memory of Eva Gore-Booth and Con Markiewicz", Wain writes about himself incidentally. Comprising nine pen-portraits of people, famous or otherwise, who have been important to him but who are now dead, this is a comparatively modest and restrained piece of writing.

The chapters vary in size and quality. Some suffer from an excess of piety. Those on Nevill Coghill and on Wain's father, for example, belong to a style of moral portraiture – the exemplary character sketch or panegyric – which reads awkwardly in the late twentieth century. Others seem – to this reviewer at least – to be of limited public interest. At the centre of *Dear Shadows*, however, is a lengthy reminiscence of Marshall McLuhan which alone is almost good enough to justify the book. Wain writes memorably about this eccentric Canadian Catholic whom he knew as a literary academic some years before McLuhan's books on media turned him into one of the 1960s' most talked-about gurus. The author of the *Gutenberg Galaxy* is glimpsed in a series of vivid snapshots: sitting on a bar-stool stifling his dyspepsia while in full verbal flow; beating the back of his neck with a strange implement to stimulate his cerebral cortex; briefly diverting his manic mental energy into playing with his children; overwhelming his audience with oracular pronouncements ("Incidentally, John, it's no accident that after 1850 English prose becomes a p.a. system").

The book's other big section might have benefited from some of the humorous touches which enliven the McLuhan portrait. In it Wain ramblingly recalls the American journalist Harvey Breit, the jazz musician Bill Coleman, and Robert Lowell and Elizabeth Hardwick who once, after a convivial evening, invited Wain to join them in bed. The piece conveys, if nothing else, the intoxicating effect that American abundance and vitality could have on an Englishman with the memory of austerity fresh in his mind. But its digressiveness strains the reader's patience ("All the time we have left Harvey Breit waiting in the wings while we circled off . . ."). Careful construction is not among the virtues of *Dear Shadows*. The final chapter, ostensibly concerned with Richard Burton, says as much about Nevill Coghill and his embattled position as a champion of student drama in wartime Oxford – ground already covered at the beginning of the book.

Self-indulgence has been a weakness of this sincere and, at best, stimulating writer. So, too, has emotional hyperbole. Though *Dear Shadows* contains nothing so extravagant as the claim in *Sprightly Running* that his childhood taught him the nature of modern totalitarianism, Wain can still resort to the wild and gratuitous comparison – as when he likens the distress caused him by the breakdown of his first marriage to the madness of John Clare. This is a book which looks back to a time when leisurely anecdotal writing, punctuated by moralizing and displays of authorial sensibility, still enjoyed a captive readership. But John Wain is not alone among his angry contemporaries in having proved rather more of a traditionalist than he first appeared.

The well-dreamed man

And in my dream I woke from the one I was having,
a dream which was nothing more than mere,
began to walk up that S-bend gravel track
which I first pictured some eight years ago,
lay down in thick sweet grass like a boy in a painting
with my straw hat over my face
and began to enter the dream which includes all dreams,
which proves at once particoloured and spacious
with a grainy feel to it like old floorboards
but gets confused with a black-and-white film I saw once
or think I saw but maybe only dreamed of,
so vivid its memory traces prove tonight
while belated cars groan fast along Brunswick Street
less than a block away
with hearts in their mouths
as though they had something big to offer knowledge.

CHRIS WALLACE-CRABBE

An evacuee returns

Janet Morgan

A. C. BAILEY
England, First and Last
212pp. Faber. £12.50.
0 571 13587 0

Here they are, looking out from the cover, in a grey and white photograph taken in the mid-1940s. Two women, one with long hair rolled off her face, in a page-boy haircut; the other looking rather like the young Princess Elizabeth, in a square-shouldered, round collared blouse, with puffed sleeves down to her elbows. The older women have drooping cardigans and flat, ribboned hats; their shoes are laced or have wedges of heel with a dent at the instep: were those "Joyce" heels? Those who smile show gappy, irregular teeth.

There is one child, a skinny boy of ten or eleven, in short trousers (well, short enough to leave space before his knee socks begin) and a flannel shirt "pulled on over one's head", he tells us, so prickly that at last he understands the phrase "hair shirt", when he finds it in "tales of the Inquisition and Various Martyrs to liberty". His socks stay up with elastic garters; his trousers, rather baggy, are held by a belt with a snake-shaped clasp. This must be Tony Bailey, or, as he is now called, A. C. Bailey, back in England from Ohio, a veteran wartime evacuee. He looks polite and interested; here, with his compatriots, he queues for his ration. But hold on. There is something odd about this picture. The people are too plump in the face for England in 1944 and this is a most disorderly sort of queue. Over the shop on the back cover it says: *Boucherie Chevaline*. This cannot be A. C. Bailey; this is hardly *England, First and Last*.

Perhaps we are not meant to notice. Maybe Faber and Faber thought we would assume horse-flesh was sold along with snoek, powdered eggs and "South African Barracouta", as promoted by the Ministry of Food. They have been careless, more likely, and this is a pity, for these are exactly the details for which Bailey has a keen eye, sharpened by four years' absence in the New World. Those first perceptions make up the early part of this book, an account of his homecoming and adolescence in England, of the late 1940s and 1950s and of his time in the army before starting university.

Bailey is most interesting at the beginning, where the contrasts are not just between England then and now, or between the American childhood he has left behind and the English one that reasserts itself. He notices afresh the brown photographs of castles and seaside above the luggage-racks in the train which brings him back to Portsmouth, to "Edenholme", a different sort of Eden from 630 Runnymede Drive. Here the proportions are reversed: the house is compact and intimate, the garden huge. Like every Englishman, his father has a shed, where he insists the tin-opener should be kept. His son observes again how the English put their dressing-tables against the window, blocking the light; he sees the Shippam's paste jars, with their user-unfriendly fastening, and the hopeless object called an electric fire. He notices nuances of appearance and behaviour, rediscovers class differences and oddities of speech (though the effect is rather spoilt by vacillation between American and English spelling).

It is a memoir that, like its predecessor, *America, Lost and Found*, should be read by people born after the war for whom the late 1940s and 1950s are neither history nor digested experience. Here's bread-rationing and Shivering with Shinwell; first intimations of sexual pleasure, experienced by children unenlightened by television or schoolteachers; National Service and Empire before the winds of change; and England with at least twelve types of home-made bicycle and fourteen makes of car. The national anthem is played at the cinema and people stand. This book of Bailey's is less tidy than its companion volume – it contains occasional tedious passages about local topography and racing in Portsmouth Creek – but adolescence is a shapeless, self-conscious time, so this looseness doesn't jar. The army brings Bailey, and the book, both discipline and aimlessness. He is sent as a subaltern to Nigeria and the book ends as he returns from the Gold Coast, with, he tells us, "the sense of a period coming to a close [that] coexisted with the blurring onrush of the present". He recognizes that, after all, life is not a series of episodes clearly marked off; those months in Africa were shaped by what he was already and will affect what he is to become. In that light, too, he now sees the earlier homecoming with which this book began: our hero's repatriation was neither the start of a different life nor the resumption of an old one. It took Tony Bailey's return to England, his first home, to present him with his "second country . . . a doubled past".

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Behind the lines

Lorna Sage

It was at Stationers' Hall, appropriately enough, that an international conference convened on April 17 and 18 to celebrate the centenary of the Berne Convention for the Protection of Literary and Artistic Works – copyright, for short – and to speculate beadily about future developments. The occasion was organized by the Intellectual Property Law Unit of Queen Mary College, University of London, and the British Literary and Artistic Copyright Association, who got in first in a year that will see a whole series of such celebratory and embattled gatherings throughout Europe, east and west, including a special number of the *TLS* on Cultural Property, in July, and an "official" International Publishers' Association do in Berne, where it all began, in September. Embattled, of course, in the face of the new technologies which have made *Copy*right more literally that than anyone used to imagine, and which threatens to beam people's brain-children round the planet with the ease of the Starship Enterprise. What price now the *droit de paternité*? Especially when developing countries – who were often not original or voluntary signatories, but, as ex-colonial possessions, inherited their membership – need to acquire copyright materials more simply and more cheaply than current agreements allow.

The notion of the author's rights, which took so long to establish, may perhaps have a limited life outside the print culture. One neat historical irony that several conference speakers referred to was the way, in Berne in 1986, a small, harmless-looking clause was inserted (to please the Swiss) which exempted mechanical musical instruments from copyright law – a *very good example of the cunning of the* Future hiding in a musical box. (But then, as someone else again noted, photocopying seems to have been invented as a means of facilitating the obtaining of patents.) On the whole, though, most participants agreed that the survival power of the Berne Union has been not unconnected with its taking one thing at a time, and its compromises. Sam Ricketson (Senior Fellow of Queen Mary College) produced a lucid history of the Union and its hybrid ancestry; in English law the "Act of Anne" (1709) that put an end to the Stationers' printing and publishing monopoly; in France the revolutionary laws of the 1790s which made copyright one of the rights of man. And at the conference itself Denis de Freitas and Dr Gyorgy Boytha each laid claim to special intimacy with the *spirit* of Berne on behalf, respectively, of free market economies and Comecon (the author's work as private property, like his house and garden, versus the author's work as, well, *work*, creative labour).

The one incontrovertible thing about Berne though, is that it was and remains Eurocentric. Professor George Koumantos from Athens (president of L'association littéraire et artistique internationale, ALAI) pointed out in most uncelebratory fashion that since the last war most of the significant "expansions" of the Convention have conspired against the author, whether they've been introduced because of legitimate demands from developing countries, or to cope with the new technologies which makes the collection of royalties logistically difficult (to say the least). Either way, he argued, authors are threatened with a creeping change which may alter the nature of copyright "from an exclusive right to a claim for some equitable remuneration". He was sceptical, too, of the value of expanding the membership, a most topical issue, since among the countries currently not signatories is the United States which, it is felt, may now at last join – for the not altogether elevated reason that since its withdrawal from Unesco it has lost its guiding influence over the (altogether more watered-down) Universal Copyright Convention of 1952.

In fact, the history of the United States' non-membership might be seen to encapsulate the conflicting pressures on copyright. During the nineteenth century (according to Hamish R. Sanderson, of Queen Mary College) the United States engaged in "state-sanctions of literary piracy of foreign works", raising the wrath (famously) of Dickens, and to the accompaniment of protests from American authors that they faced unfair competition from much cheaper (because stolen) works from Europe. The argument for piracy (paraphrased by Trollope) went like this:

> That American readers are the gainers – that as they can get for nothing the use of certain property, they would be cutting their own throats were they to pass a law debarring themselves from the power of such appropriation.

It was, he added, the "bookselling leviathans" who really gained. The legal situation in the United States has changed radically during this century (hence the real possibility that it may sign up), but in a sense history is being repeated in the developing world. The objectives of the unfortunately-named Unesco agency charged with these things (WIPO – World Intellectual Property Organization) spell it out: "to assist developing countries to increase the creation of literary and artistic works by their own nationals and thereby to maintain their national culture"; and at the same time "to improve the conditions of the acquisition of the right . . . to enjoy the literary and artistic works in which copyright is owned by foreigners . . .". The tension between these aims, multiplied enormously by the opportunities for copying and piracy opened up everywhere by the new technologies, was perhaps the real theme of the London conference. The Berne convention is still the strongest multi-lateral treaty on copyright, and a kind of bulwark against the proliferating pressures which threaten both creators and consumers (we are all "developing", or should be). So there's cause for cautious celebration, after all.

* * *

It looks as though the late twentieth century may see a return to eighteenth-century styles of publishing when booksellers (those ubiquitous stationers) were publishers too. Rymans' newly announced awards scheme might suggest so – the prizes (£500 to each winner, plus a £1,000 advance for the winning novel, and £500 advances in the other categories for poems, short stories, pop lyrics and a children's book) do involve guaranteed "conventional" publication where appropriate, but the rights will belong to "Ryman New Writers 1986 Awards". What is distinctive about this scheme is that you pay £25 to enter, and get an "individual written critique" in 200 words from "a professional publisher's reader" regardless of whether your work ever falls under the eyes of the distinguished and very busy judges, who include Auberon Waugh, Geoffrey Wheatcroft, John Peel and Gavin Ewart. John Vaughan, one of the public relations persons who put the package together, expects between 2,000 and 3,500 entries, despite the fee, of which (he points out) £5 covers administration, and £20 the exact cost of the readers. This last figure provides food for thought: literary prizes are multiplying on every side, but where (as Gore Vidal likes to ask) are the prizes for *readers*? Mr Vaughan says readers are in plentiful supply – he's already lined up fifty-odd "professionals" (fiction is the difficulty – pop lyrics and poems no problem). "The truth of the matter is", said he, "that there are a large number of ladies – such as yourself, I would imagine – prepared to give a very good critique at £20 for 200 words."

And alas, in a sense Mr Vaughan must be right. Reflecting on the experience of having been one of the judges of this year's Sinclair prize for an unpublished novel (£5,000 to the winner, plus an advance of not less than £2,000 from the publishers, Heinemann), I find it works out uncomfortably close to his shaming figure. The incentive for the reader is, of course, the hope of finding a very good novel which has fallen through the publishers' net – a hope splendidly vindicated this year by the Sinclair winner, *Coming to Birth* by Marjorie Oludhe Macgoye, who has never published in this country, though she has in Kenya where she has lived and worked since 1954. *Coming to Birth* is a meticulous, compulsive book about a Kenyan women living through Independence, that exactly fulfils Sir Clive Sinclair's brief for a novel "which is not only of literary merit, but of social or political significance". Mrs Oludhe Macgoye wouldn't have won a Ryman award though – not (God forbid) because of "political or social significance", but because she's not resident in the United Kingdom or Eire, because she's published a novel before, and (probably) because she's fifty-eight years old ("new" talent equals youth for Ryman). Application forms are available from Ryman shops, or the Ryman New Writers Award, PO Box 38, London SW3 3NL; closing date for actual entries August 31, winners announced October 1986. Entrants also have the chance to win a word processor.

* * *

What bi-monthly magazine boasts a reader profile showing that 91 per cent of subscribers attended college, 89 per cent entertain at least once a month, 54.1 per cent own two or more cars, and 29.8 per cent bought a painting or drawing in the last six months? Answer: *FMR* (America), launched for the first time in the United Kingdom this month at £7 an issue. To quote (why not?) the American *Christian Science Monitor:*

> *FMR* may just send us on a more adventurous esthetic voyage than any package-tour we have yet to take. *FMR* is beautiful to look at and luxurious to handle. It is heavy and shiny, with lots of black and gold and jewel-like colour exquisitely printed on 75-pound matte-coated paper . . . .

FMR, first published in Italy in 1982, is "the personal creation of Franco Maria Ricci", publisher and designer who once confessed to profilers from *The Sunday Times Magazine* "elegance is the only natural resource we Italians have". One should add, however, his own taste for what he calls "nuance" – the April number has, for instance, a leisurely study of the role of bugs in art (text – "A Fly in the Pigment" by André Chastel). An editorial notes (with a touch of malice) that "today, even more than during the height of the British Empire, the sun never sets on the lands that speak, read and write the English language". Indeed, *FMR* displays not a little reluctance to expand: the Italian April edition goes out of its way to reassure readers that they are still part of an élite. Certainly, British readers, when you think of it, are not likely to do much to enhance that elegant profile.

FIFTY YEARS ON

The TLS *of April 25, 1936, carried a review of Edith Wharton's* The World Over, *from which these extracts are taken:*

What a pleasure it is to observe mastery of a craft! Mrs Wharton learned her craft in the days when mastery was still generally appreciated, and now, an unsuppressed survivor of a tradition temporarily obscured, she continues by her example to show to a raw world what ease, finish and lightness mean in fiction. Here are seven short stories, none of them, for Mrs Wharton, exceptionally brilliant but all, even the slightest, admirable examples of an art.

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Letters

'The Audit of War'

Sir, – Correlli Barnett (Letters, April 11) is wrong. I did not find the "basic standpoint" of *The Audit of War* distasteful. I found his arguments incomplete and one-sided.

Mr Barnett says I was unfair to ask what kind of decline he was writing about – decline of British power, industrial decline, or economic decline – when he had stated in his preface that the purpose of his book was to "uncover the causes of Britain's protracted decline as an industrial country since the Second World War". But his book is subtitled "The illusion and reality of Britain as a great nation"; and when he writes (also in his preface) that "industrial strength supplies the fundamental factor . . . in a nation's power and its material well-being alike" it seems clear that he thinks that in talking about Britain's industrial decline he is drawing attention to the "fundamental factor" in the other declines as well. He could hardly think his thesis important if he did not think he was doing this; since on its own the fact that the British were and are less efficient than the Germans in doing some things is neither here nor there. My object in asking the question was to point out that the linkages between the various "declines" cannot be assumed: they have to be argued. Why does Barnett think that efficiency in producing "industrial" goods and services is more "fundamental" to economic well-being than efficiency in producing other kinds? What does he think the link is between Britain's failure to establish itself as a "world leader in advanced technologies" and the relative decline of its per capita GNP? Or: why does he think morality or reputation less "fundamental" than "industrial strength" as a power resource? Anyway, what does he mean by "power", "industrial strength", "material well-being", "great nation", "world leader"? It is disappointing to read a book today which treats the definitions of, and links between, these terms as so unproblematic as to need no discussing.

Barnett says that I "conflate" the arguments of his previous book *The Collapse of British Power* with those of *The Audit of War*. In fact he uses the same explanatory scheme in both books, which is another reason for supposing that he thinks he is writing about the same subject, or set of subjects. According to Barnett the basic cause of British failure lies in the moralizing and amateur character of the British Establishment. As he says (pp 11–12), "the same kind of people, indeed in some cases the very same people" whose "moralizing internationalism" had brought Britain to such desperate straits by 1940 (when his previous book ends) spearheaded the New Jerusalem movement which brought about Britain's industrial decline after 1945. He never seems to realize what a problem this creates for his thesis that the causes of Britain's post-war industrial decline are to be found in the "illusions" bred by war victory. If the myopia of the ruling class was fundamental, the war experience was at best secondary. It did not so much breed illusions as validate existing cultural attitudes and institutions.

Barnett questions my claim that British planning for post-war full employment "assumed" a higher level of world demand after 1945 than before 1939. I agree with him that there was much dispute about this; and I should have made clear that I was talking about the Keynesians and not all the wartime planners. To Keynes and Beveridge (after his conversion to Keynes) it was inconceivable that governments of the main countries would again allow unemployment to develop on the scale of the 1930s: Beveridge in his book *Full Employment in a Free Society* (1944) took it as an "assumption" of the Atlantic Charter that "all the larger countries will announce and adopt a policy for maintaining employment at home" (p 239). In this kind of world, and with expected American help in the transition period, the problem of maintaining British full employment after the war did not appear insuperable to the Keynesians, and they were right. Moreover, the early Keynesians were not so naïve as to believe that full employment could be maintained by continual boosts to consumer spending, as Barnett claims (p 238). Rather, they believed that consumption would have to be held down to make room for exports and investment. The Attlee government did this in 1945–51. Where was the "illusion" here? Barnett's mistake is to look at this period through Thatcherite spectacles.

Finally, a brief reply to R. J. Overy (Letters, April 11). In stating that Britain succeeded in mobilizing a higher proportion of its man-power and woman-power for war than did Germany, I was simply reproducing the well-known finding of the US Strategic Bombing Survey of 1945. For all I know, the figures in this may be obsolete, in which case I stand corrected. But Overy's figures do not in themselves invalidate the finding. The fact that women made up 37.4 per cent of the workforce in Germany in 1939, whereas the British proportion was only 32.5 per cent in 1941, tells us nothing about the proportions in both countries mobilized for war work. In Germany the number of employed women actually fell in the first two years of the war; of those who remained employed a large proportion were domestic servants, who still numbered 1.3m in 1944. As to 60 per-cent of the German industrial workforce being employed on military orders in 1941 compared to 49 per cent in Britain in the same year, one would need to know whether "military orders" meant the same thing in both countries, and what proportion, if any, of the "German industrial workforce" consisted of imported labourers, before one could assess the significance of the figures. And there are other measures of war mobilization (for example, hours worked per week, frequency of night shifts, proportion of resources devoted to civilian consumption) on which the Germans seem to have scored less well than the British.

ROBERT SKIDELSKY.
Department of International Studies, Warwick University, Coventry.

Sir, – It was with a mixture of amusement and dismay that I read Correlli Barnett's enthusiastic praise of Daimler-Benz for outstripping Rolls-Royce in wartime productivity (Letters, April 11). Like other major industrial enterprises harnessed to the Nazi war machine, Daimler-Benz was assigned large numbers of conscripted foreign labourers – some of them slaves from concentration camps. It is extraordinary that Barnett should be so contemptuous of the British for accepting American "hand-outs" (what were they supposed to do, hand them back?) without mentioning the ruthless Nazi campaign of plunder and exploitation carried out in occupied Europe by Goering and Sauckel. Even native German workers knew that malingering or "defeatism" could land them in a concentration camp and might lead to the death penalty. The British, inhibited by their soppy parliamentary system and their whingeing Christian ethics, could not imitate Nazi managerial techniques. I for one cannot feel too sorry about that. By all means let us praise and admire *post-war* German economic achievements. But to compare Nazi industrial practices with those of Churchill and Bevin is absurd.

A. J. NICHOLLS.
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Robbins and After

Sir, – John Fletcher (Letters, April 18) is right to mock the magisterial hindsight of Lord Annan in his review of John Carswell's fine book on post-war university policy (April 11). Expansion was not a universities' lobby led by Robbins, it was an enforced response to the political pressures that led to the setting up of the Robbins Committee in the first place. I agree with Annan, however, about the failure of Robbins to think beyond numbers to the qualitative and curricular opportunities and problems of any *expanded* system (I prefer to say neither "mass" nor "democratic") which had to arise from and through the old élite system.

Robbins could have built into expansion, as was done in the Polytechnics, Lord Snow's "two cultures" argument (damn it, the old fellow was right). And he could have questioned that the main effort should continue to go into a three-year continuous straight-from-school honours race: the bad neglect of part-timers and mature adults, apart from Birkbeck College (London's small fig-leaf of virtue) and the sprawling and distanced Open University.

Both Fletcher and Annan, however, confuse the question of absolute numbers with the number of universities. Problems today would be less if the greater numbers had covered fewer units with wider degrees, covering both the vocational and the intellectual. In the early 1960s many civic universities resisted expansion. There was a civic Vice-Chancellor with a university (*sic*!) of a mere 2,000 souls who confused his role with that of the head porter by saying that it would cease to be a university if it got so large that he could not recognize every student. That was Oxbridge college ideology – which also contributed, I suspect, to the founding of the new universities as park-land boarding schools, not as part of civic culture and (with hindsight) of inner-city renewal.

The good old civic universities went national post-war, abandoned their local roots and support, and then lost a second chance by being slow off the mark post-Robbins. Now we are stuck not with too many students (Annan is wrong by any comparative standard) but with too many centres, each claiming (here Annan is right) to be equal and doing roughly the same thing in the same old hidebound ways.

BERNARD CRICK.
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'Katerina Brac'

Sir, – I admire Elaine Feinstein's writing and enjoyed her review of Christopher Reid's *Katerina Brac* (March 21). There are points I should like to discuss with both poet and reviewer – I don't think, for instance, that Reid's Katerina is meant to "take her place alongside the great female poets of Europe". I see her as modest and minor. And whereas I would wholly accept Elaine Feinstein's view that the language has an assurance that contains no echo of alien lyric forms or structures, I do think that from word to word there are curious flatnesses and absences of resonance in the English which are our common experience in reading translated poetry. For instance:

> I still have your book
> it stays mostly on its shelf,
> but I pick it up from time to time
> when I want to give myself a fright.

Or, of a mirror:

> So these touches of tarnish
> are an attempt to express
> a little of what it remembers.
> How sad!

These are gawky and moving, and too colloquial, not quite English.

But the real thing that worries me about the review is its conclusion. Elaine Feinstein observes, precisely, that Reid is "dreaming of a freedom from frivolity". She goes on: "Perhaps because we sense as much, it is possible to overlook the air of a gentlemanly joke aimed directly at the poetry establishment."

I find this puzzling, as I find many current references to the poetry establishment puzzling. I don't think Reid's poems are in any way "gentlemanly" or "jokey" – they are witty, serious and, despite being fictions about an alien society, somehow *privately* moving. I am not sure Elaine Feinstein really thinks they are "gentlemanly" or "jokey" either. But it seems to be in the air to think that gentlemanly jokes are going on. As an intermittent reader of poetry I am more baffled, at present, by the categorical generalizations both of irritated poets and sociologizing journalists than I have been in the past. The Movement in the 1950s did have a kind of coherence. Today's "poetry establishment" may well have a social coherence. But the poems themselves are much easier and rewarding to read if we forget the boxes into which we are being asked to slot them.

A. S. BYATT.
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Contributions, in the form of critical articles, reviews, queries, announcements, are invited for the first issue of the *Jean Rhys Review*, to be published bi-annually. They should be addressed to the Editor, Nora Gaines, at 243 Riverside Drive, Apartment 503, New York, New York 10025, USA.

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Keeping up appurtenances

Stanley Wells

SHAKESPEARE
Romeo and Juliet
Royal Shakespeare Theatre,
Stratford-upon-Avon

Michael Bogdanov's shortened – but not short – version of *Romeo and Juliet* employs all the clichés of modern-dress Shakespeare: clergymen on bicycles, leather-clad youngsters on heavy motor-cycles, a sports car, a swimming-pool whose only function is for someone to fall into it, flick-knives and chains in place of swords and rapiers. The appurtenances are tediously predictable, but the production displays some of the virtues of the mode. There is a serious attempt to root the dialogue in social reality. Benvolio prises a brandy bottle away from a chronically sozzled Mercutio on "I pray thee, good Mercutio, let's retire"; the Nurse, trying to rouse the drugged Juliet, looks at her wrist-watch before saying "I needs must wake her"; a howl from Lady Montague provokes the Prince's "I will be deaf to pleading and excuses."

These and similar devices encourage the performers to speak their lines with freshness and particularity. The speaking pace in general is steady, opening up the lines rather than assailing us with them. The method helps to release the play's latent comedy. Rebuked for swearing by the inconstant moon, Romeo responds with a touching puzzlement: "What *shall* I swear by?" Dilys Laye's Nurse, lacking in earthiness, is entertaining in her pretensions to gentility. Best of all is the idealistic practicality of Robert Demeger's Friar Laurence; after the shrewdly calculated vehemence with which he forces Romeo out of his despair, one can almost forgive the actor the drag on a cigarette marking the character's sense of relief that his tactic has succeeded.

Many of the characterizations betray an attempt to find modern social counterparts to the inhabitants of sixteenth-century Verona, but too often this results in the projection of mere stereotypes, reducing the range of the roles as Shakespeare wrote them. Capulet, conceived as a brusquely successful, cigar-smoking northern business man, is a less rounded character than he should be; Lady Capulet is caricatured as his hard-faced, socially ambitious wife; Paris as a pretty but shallow boy works passably well in his earlier scenes but fails totally after Juliet's supposed death; and the Prince is a hollow, ranting poseur.

The characters on whom the production's modernity impinges least are more successfully portrayed, though Michael Kitchen lapses into mannerism as Mercutio; playing him as a drunkard produces some amusing moments but reduces his intelligence and confines his verbal imagination. The lovers, simply costumed, stand a little outside the production's time scheme. Although Sean Bean's Romeo is inept in gesture, he plays the big emotional moments with honest directness if not with technical expertise. Niamh Cusack as Juliet is initially youthful to the point of green-sickness, adolescently embarrassed by her Nurse's indiscretions but aware of the power of her own sexuality. Her invocation to night, in which, though the verse is not intoned, both its rhythm and its meaning are respected, shows her at her best.

As the play deepens into tragedy the production loses its grip and dwindles into self-indulgence, most blatantly in the elaborate carnival gratuitously introducing blown-up caricatures of current political leaders which can be excused only as a heavy-handedly ironic background to Romeo's reception of the news of Juliet's supposed death. After the lovers have died, there is a brief blackout; when the lights go up again, the bier has become a plinth bearing upright golden statues of Romeo and Juliet. The Prince speaks the play's opening Chorus (omitted earlier), transposed into the past tense, as an introduction to a public ceremony enacted before television cameras and press photographers. The lovers' tragedy has become a media event, and most of the publicity conscious survivors are interested mainly in the figure that they cut before the cameras. In its cheap cynicism, this ending epitomizes the production's worst elements: its cultivation of superficial theatricality, its shying away from the direct exploration of serious emotion, and its exploitation of Shakespeare's play for doctrinaire purposes.

Meta-chronological liberations

Lawrence Gowing

Caravaggio
Lumière Cinema
DEREK JARMAN
Derek Jarman's Caravaggio
With photographs by Gerald Incandela.
132pp, with 111 illustrations, 7 in colour.
Thames and Hudson. Paperback, £9.95.
0500274193

I am not sure that it is fair to send people who know about Caravaggio to Derek Jarman's film. But others may be thankful not to miss it. The film is a rather remarkable meditation on a series of picturesque and passionate tableaux resourcefully derived from a selection of Caravaggio's works and the milieu that may be deduced from them. Not only that, it is an interesting and original reverie on the subject of re-imagining the past, which in the book of the film Derek Jarman tells us obsesses him. He understands the past, which we have no choice but to act and imagine in the light of, as the total past, everything between then and now, including every parallel that comes to mind, whether revealing or misleading. Baglione, for example, writes his libellous characterization of Caravaggio in the role of Marat in his bath, and it is a curious enrichment of the fantasy that he writes it on a vintage typewriter. The painter meets with Ranuccio in a 1930s truck garage, with a General Motors radiator interposed between them.

The major tableaux of the process of painting the "Death of the Virgin", for instance, and the posing of the vicious young men who were the turning-point of the "Martyrdom of St Matthew", have undoubted beauty and sometimes offer quite useful bases for speculation about how such pictures came to be painted. Anyone who likes the artist should enjoy them and indeed envy those who had the chance to contrive them. We could all learn quite a lot from an opportunity to reconstruct the situations that resulted in our favourite pictures.

I do not find the Giustiniani party which is the central set-piece of the film particularly relevant to this least sociable or bizarre of artists. It looks more like a Fellini party to me, and that is natural, for a continuous subsidiary theme is the meditation on various kinds of Italian film-making, with an undertone of indignation that, instead of Cinecittà, it had to be conducted on the Isle of Dogs. As the adult Caravaggio Nigel Terry is convincing, indeed sombrely compelling, in his Wyndham Lewis hat. It would be hard to think of a film in which the sexual crux is more vividly imagined. Jarman evidently took every kind of pain to ensure that the climax should be exactly that. I do not know when the poetry of manual release has been better filmed. The childhood of the painter, his paedophilia and his deathbed are all in mind and in vision together through the film. The last ends in the moving vigil of a Mafia funeral. The paedophilia produces an invented character, Jerusaleme, who is described as a narrative device. My feeling is that Caravaggio's real friend, the painter Mario Minitti, away in Hades, has cause for complaint.

Where so much is so good to look at, the incongruities do not greatly matter and those who suffer at such things should simply stay away. You can test yourself: if you know enough about the documented drama to feel irritated by Cardinal del Monte confiscating a penknife etched "Nec Spec, Nec Metu", and selling it back for a picture with the warning that it is against the law, then this film is possibly not for you. Jarman, writing much about his researches and quoting liberally from the sources, has neglected numerous turns in the recorded biography which would have been highly germane to his view of the artist. But the only serious criticism is that he nowhere visualized the intensity of the lonely face-to-face confrontation of painter and model which was the indispensable nucleus of Caravaggio's art, its triumph and its agony.

The handout rather disarmingly explains that the film is as much about the artist Jarman as about Caravaggio. It is perfectly legitimate to take Caravaggio as a fiction and a source for one's own meta-chronological liberation from history. But the actual recorded story was full of wonderful subjects for Jarman. Life painting is an intimate and continuous crisis of the kind he films best. The British Film Institute should send him back to make another film about it.

AUTHOR, AUTHOR

Competition No 275
Readers are invited to identify the sources of the three quotations which follow and to send us the answers so that they reach this office not later than May 16. A prize of £20 is offered for the first correct set of answers opened on that date, or failing that the most nearly correct – in which case inspired guesswork will also be taken into consideration.

Entries, marked "Author, Author 275" on the envelope, should be addressed to the Editor, *The Times Literary Supplement*, Priory House, St John's Lane, London EC1M 4BX. The solution and results will appear on May 23.

1 Now if you'd train a parrot, catch him young
While soft the mouth and tractable the tongue.
Old birds are fools; they dodder in their speech,
More eager to forget than you to teach.

2 "Parrot, Parrot, Parrot, pretty popinjay!"
With my beak I can pick my little pretty toe;
My delight is solace, pleasure, disport and play.
Like a wanton, when I will, I reel to and fro.

3 Somewhere, somewhen I've seen
But where or when I'll never know
Parrots of shrilly green
With crests of shriller scarlet flying
Out of black cedars as the sun was dying
Against cold peaks of snow.

Competition No 271
Winner: Mrs L. Bucksey
Answers:
1 Plonk will do for me.
If there's cork in it
Or lipstick on the rim,
I shan't make a fuss.
D. J. Enright, "The Wine List".

2 "I rather like bad wine", said Mr Mountchesney; "one gets so bored with good wine."
Benjamin Disraeli, *Sybil*, Book 1 chapter 1.

3 Just returned from dinner with Jackson (The Emperor of Pugilism) and another of the select at Crib's, the champions. I drank more than I like, and have brought away some three bottles of very fair claret – for I have no headache.
Lord Byron, *Journal*, November 26, 1813.

The parable of the player

Michael Hofmann

ARIANE MNOUCHKINE
Mephisto
Barbican Theatre

In Klaus Mann's novel *Mephisto*, there is a scene in which the central figure, the actor Hendrik Höfgen, newly rehabilitated and playing his most famous role, is called up to the box of his benefactor, "der Flieger" or "der Dicke" (Hermann Goering), and the whole theatre sees them talking together. The interval has to be specially extended, indeed, the actual performance is quite overshadowed by their meeting: the harmless professional showman and the murderous amateur; the cloak and eyebrows and greasepaint, and the paunch in the fantasy uniform. Artistically and politically, the scene is typically resonant, rich in ironies and appealing to the eye.

You will look for it in vain – and for much else besides – in Ariane Mnouchkine's stage adaptation of the book, still, rather oddly, called *Mephisto*. Mnouchkine's play, which was seen at the Round House in London in 1979, is an example of the explosive type of adaptation. Fragments of the book are flung out from time to time, relatively intact: the first, backstage meeting of Höfgen (Alan Rickman) and the great Jewish actress Dora – here, Carola – Martin (Susan Tracy); the breakfast scene over the boiled eggs; the political haunting at the end. What is missing is anything to give these scenes weight context, purpose or meaning. By contrast, Klaus Mann's progressions are wonderfully clear: the novel moves from Hamburg to Berlin to the Reichstheater; from the provinces to the metropolis; from the mooted "Revolutionary Theatre" to Aryan Theatre; from cosmopolitan theatre to propaganda theatre. It delineates the possibilities and dependencies, the power structures, and the literary and political atmospheres. The novel is exemplary and cautionary in character, it is "the novel of a career", a parable, a parabola: the play is shapeless.

What is offered in place of shape is facts. The Mann family is brought in for biographical background. There are dates and events, the Munich coup, the death of Lenin, the elections of 1930. The *Pfeffermühle* cabaret of Klaus and his sister Erika provides a few sketches. Part of an early play by Klaus is rehearsed – it seems to have been a lesbian ballet. The confusion is not improved by the fact that the names of many of the characters have been given a half-turn away from the *roman à clef* of the original, but identifying the Brückner family as Mann's, giving them the appropriate Christian names in some cases, and finding actors to look like them proves nothing. It seems only to be another, more concrete style of name-dropping; in the same way that Reinhardt, Dachau and "The Magician" are mentioned. Similarly, the references to the present day: Dutch elm disease, the passing years – "eighty-three, eighty-four, eighty-five" – confirm an opportunistic attitude to history and a smothering lack of concern for the subject.

And what of Mephisto, the bravura actor? The jewelled glances from the fishy eyes, the metal tones in the voice, "das aasige Lächeln", "the carrion smile", the excess weight around the hips that Klaus Mann endowed him with, in his brilliant, smitten and suspicious descriptions of him? He is practically written out of it; he hardly seems to be there at all. We are given nothing of his ability to play any part better than its incumbent (male or female), his training, his weekly breakdowns, his coquettish fear of rivals, his way of charming directors, money-men and Nazis. Even the Nazis are not very apparent. One is there for symmetry, speaking on the microphone after a performance, another toys with a supposedly vicious piece of metal resembling a bicycle pump. There is no "Flieger", no Cäsar von Muck. And if Mephisto has shrunk, his fellow-actors have swollen, acquiring importance without character, interest or credibility; Otto, the stalwart Communist; Miklas the Nazi; Mrs Efeu, the forceful, foul-mouthed prompter. All these, briefly and expertly delineated by Mann, in their fixed places in the theatre hierarchy, served to show off the ability and attitudes of Höfgen. Now they have been moved. I could only identify the director Herr Kroge (here, Magnus) three-quarters of the way through. The scene in which he and his wife discuss the possibility of their imminent deaths is one of several moments of coarse comedy in Adrian Noble's production.

The human resources on view are sadly overwhelmed by the technical resources of the Barbican. There is a dazzling opening when a battery of floodlights go up at the back of the stage, and actors bow to an imaginary audience to thunderous taped applause. Ilona Sekacz contributes lively and brassy Weillian music for the scene-changes, and the flies throw down mirrors and swastikas, the diseased elm-trees and a very healthy red railway bridge to point us to a Berlin which otherwise somehow never happened. Whistles shriek across the auditorium. Oh yes, and somebody does conjuring tricks, but I forget who or why. Generally, the production feels happiest when it most resembles a circus.

Monuments to individuality

Edward Mendelson

Augustus Saint-Gaudens
Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, until May 11

New York has had three opportunities to install Augustus Saint-Gaudens's monument to Abraham Lincoln at the entrance to the city's Lincoln Center for the Performing Arts. It refused all three. This masterwork of America's greatest sculptor – it was commissioned for Chicago and a copy faces Parliament Square – portrays Lincoln not as an idealized hero but as an embodiment of moral care and political skill, an orator in the act of gathering his powers from inner strength and eternal law. The city's Art Commission reportedly found three different reasons to reject the monument. They decided on one occasion that it would detract from the banal façade of the Metropolitan Opera House; on another, that a cosmetics magnate who was donating a fountain would be annoyed to see his gift upstaged by it. On a third occasion, they rejected it because they simply didn't like it.

Their attitude is a vestige of a time when Modernism's arid winds prevailed in the climate of the arts, and Saint-Gaudens, when he was noticed at all, was dismissed as an American imitator of l'Ecole des Beaux-Arts. In the more temperate atmosphere of the present, critics and curators again recognize his psychological insight and dramatic force, and understand that he embodied these in his exact use of classical and Renaissance precedents. From his earliest cameos to his last civic sculptures, in works which always combined acute, precise details within strong, emphatic forms, he portrayed individual character with unrivalled complexity and depth.

New York, the site of Saint-Gaudens's memorials to the Civil War heroes General Sherman and Admiral Farragut, saw much of what it is missing when a large exhibition of his work opened a few months ago at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. (It has now moved to Boston where it will remain until May 11.) The exhibition is mounted grandly: monumental figures of soldiers and statesmen keep watch over relief portraits of friends, patrons, and children, while Victory, Diana, and Amor Caritas preside over all.

Saint-Gaudens was brought to New York by his French shoemaker father and Irish mother in 1848 when he was a few months old. By the time he made his first visit to Paris, at nineteen, after six years as an apprentice to cameo-makers, he had begun the experiments in figure and ground that would become increasingly elaborate in the relief portraits he made in later years. After Paris he worked in Rome – where his muscular, life-size Hiawatha showed how quickly he learned from Michelangelo. Back in New York, he initiated his mature style with a marble bust of William Evarts that combined a classical vocabulary of form with a gaunt and realistic intensity of feature. He also began a lifetime of friendship and collaboration with the architects Stanford White and Charles F. McKim, who designed the bases for his public monuments and the modest but inventive frames for his portraits. White's broad, sinuous base for Saint-Gaudens's craggy, erect figure of Admiral Farragut (displayed at full scale) makes this early monument a special triumph of balance and contrast.

Saint-Gaudens worked on his splendid relief portraits from the time of his second stay in Paris until the end of his life. While giving him a steady income, they provided him with opportunities for experiments in low relief, in irregular ornament and background, and in abrupt contrasts of finish and detail. The constraints of the medium obliged him to explore ever more subtle ways of delineating character, and he learned to make a woman's hair or a man's beard as expressive as eyes and mouth. A stern chin in one portrait is balanced by soft tufts of hair at the base of the neck; in another, wild ringlets contradict placid eyes. In a joyous caricature of McKim, White, and Saint-Gaudens himself, the playfulness hidden in the commissioned portraits erupts to fill the frame.

The best of these portraits reveal moments of intense personal drama. A marble relief of Stanford White's bride – Saint-Gaudens's wedding present – portrays her as she draws back her bridal veil with one hand while the other hand holds roses which have just begun to open. A group of reliefs of his patrons' children shows them discovering in themselves the force of character in their parents. Saint-Gaudens became so intuitively adept at portraying a unique personality, or the similarities and differences in the members of a family, that few projects gave him more trouble than a commission for a figure with no character at all. This was the funerary monument Henry Adams commissioned for his wife's tomb, a hooded figure without expression, gender, or symbolic attributes, embodying an indefinable repose that may or may not be the aftermath of grief. (A copy is displayed in such a way as to suggest the secluded calm of the original.) Also on display are four versions of Saint-Gaudens's only female nude, the Diana first conceived as a weather-vane for Stanford White's Madison Square Garden in New York. This lithe figure was a tribute to Davida Clark, Saint-Gaudens's mistress and mother of one of his sons, but it has the chaste, impersonal serenity of an ideal form.

Saint-Gaudens's head of a soldier for the Shaw Memorial, 1897; from the exhibition reviewed here.

While Saint-Gaudens earned his income through his work for America's wealthy, his wit and moral insight preserved his artistic autonomy. The caryatids representing Amor and Pax that he made for a fireplace in the Vanderbilt mansion are clearly overburdened by the enormous mantel they support. A relatively modest commission for a Civil War memorial, initiated by a fugitive slave, led to his greatest work. The commission was for a monument to Robert Gould Shaw, a young patrician who left Harvard to lead the first volunteer regiment of black soldiers, and who was killed with most of his men in their second battle. When Shaw's family told Saint-Gaudens that his first proposal of an equestrian statue was too presumptuous, he devised an entirely new kind of monument. The finished work, in strikingly high relief, portrays Shaw erect on horseback, but gives equal honour to the black soldiers marching stoically at his side. (Later, a few years before his death in 1907, Saint-Gaudens had a chance to carry out his original idea when he made a grand equestrian statue of General William Tecumseh Sherman, led by a touchingly human Victory with the face and form of Davida Clark.)

Saint-Gaudens portrayed Shaw with a tragic hint of the quixotic, but he gave an even more tragic inwardness and resignation to Shaw's soldiers. After planning only a minor background role for the black volunteers, he grew increasingly affected by their sacrifice; at the same time he grew fascinated by the variety of facial structures found among American blacks. He made about forty preliminary studies of the heads of Shaw's soldiers during the thirteen years he worked on the project, and the sixteen sharply characterized faces he finally included in the memorial itself embody the sufferings of a whole continent of nations and peoples. The memorial itself, in Boston Common, is represented by a photograph, and only a few of Saint-Gaudens's separate studies for it are on display, but they are the most moving works in an extraordinarily moving exhibition.

Real and super-real

Patrick Carnegy

GIUSEPPE VERDI
Otello
Welsh National Opera on tour

Peter Stein's new production of *Otello* for Welsh National Opera has been widely praised for fidelity to Verdi's intentions. This was not at all what one would have anticipated from a director whose only previous operatic venture, the *Ring* in Paris, had begun so catastrophically that it was abruptly abandoned. It looked as though Stein – a former left-wing experimentalist, whose lavishly rebuilt Schaubühne Theatre has now been clasped to West Berlin's well-lined bourgeois bosom – had put a wicked past behind him and settled for the opera director's ultimate *trahison* of sticking to what the composer had said he wanted.

The performance is indeed remarkable in bringing one close enough to the quintessential *Otello* experience to feel that one has caught a privileged glimpse of "the opened eye of the score" – by which phrase Adolphe Appia meant an ideal staging where every element sprang from the work's musical substance and not from anywhere else.

The key to Stein's projection of Verdi is that it is rooted both in the score and in a study of what Shakespeare's *Othello* meant to the composer and his librettist Boito, and how it reached them through a highly wrought acting style influenced by A.W. Schlegel's peculiar view of the Moor as a Noble Barbarian reverting disgracefully to his savage origins. Boito seems to have been more in thrall to this latter notion than Verdi, who knew that the tragedy was critically dependent on the credibility of Otello's standing as a Venetian nobleman rather than as the "tiger in the desert" – the interpretation favoured by the most highly regarded actors of the time.

Stein has Jeffrey Lawton play Otello closer to Boito's concept than Verdi's – a rough-hewn warrior leader, tempted to plunge in with drawn sword to end the drunken affray before remembering that verbal authority is his proper part. He is the man of action redeemed and damned by love. As the great love duet surges to its climax, Boito's quite unShakespearean lines, "Ah! la gioia m'innonda / Si fieramente che ansante mi giacio" ("ah! joy so proudly floods me that, panting, I stagger") are interpreted quite literally: Otello collapses to the floor and urges Desdemona down to join him for the kiss, thus ensuring that the association of giacio/bacio becomes almost Elizabethan in its sexual imagery.

Stein and his designer Lucio Fanti frame the action within a steeply raked box, the sides and back of which are painted *trompe-l'oeil* fashion – shadows and all – to suggest a quayside square in a Renaissance city, and they can be swung open to disclose other perspectives and vistas, most notably of the sea and sky. This is all arranged within a giant picture frame so that the spectator has the feeling that a sequence of pictures has sprung into three-dimensional animation, though in a style that is surreal rather than naturalistic. The effect of this is to concentrate and distance the drama, in a way analogous to that in which the Boito/Verdi opera distils Shakespeare's original. The open quayside space of the storm scene becomes progressively more constricted until in the final scene the bed becomes the sole focus of attention.

The use of physical space, lighting, groupings, and the entire choreography of the action are consistently structural, embedded in the raw material of music and text. The chorus is given a central role, swirling around and about the principals and always interacting with them. Otello's "Esultate!" soars up out of the massed phalanx of the people, and his subsequent relationship with them is the counterpart in the social sphere to his private relationship with Desdemona. The scandal of his public humiliation of her becomes even more terrible when the raging Otello sets about the very bystanders with whom he has been so closely identified.

The most strikingly original characterization is that of Donald Maxwell's Iago, which is also the most accomplished vocal performance. He is a fleet-footed jester who often seems to be playing Mephisto to Otello's rather improbable Faust. His go-between role is further underlined in that, in Act Two, he conjures events with the help of a red proscenium curtain. Throughout he is the nimble ring-master, stepping out of the framed action to draw the audience more closely into it. Yet there remains something not quite convincing about this vivid image deriving, as Stein has explained, "from the tradition of the Fool and the Vice in the English medieval plays, but his identity changes at every moment". This is surely too protean a view of the Iago unequivocally defined in "Credo in un Dio crudel".

Jeffrey Lawton is impressive as Otello, never hesitating to sacrifice tonal beauty on the altar of dramatic truth when occasion demands. Helen Field is a match for him in her nervous intensity, and she brings to the role of Desdemona a lithe, balletic grace, whether in movement or composing her white arms around Otello's charcoal neck like some Pre-Raphaelite figure. Yet there is something over-tense about her performance and her intonation occasionally falls victim to the *espressivo* she summons up to carry her through.

Some of the lack of balance between singers and orchestra may be attributed to the fact that, lacking a pit in Oxford's Apollo Theatre (where I saw it), the orchestra was aggressively encamped across the entire front section of the stalls. Yet Richard Armstrong's vibrant account of the score, with thrilling detail in instrumental solos, often threatens to turn the performance into a concerto for orchestra and one can only be grateful that the compelling staging and the valiant commitment of the singers ensures that it is not.

That Peter Stein succeeds in creating so unforgettable an impression of Verdi's historical *Otello* by using a totally modernistic approach is itself a paradoxical achievement. His *Otello* is perhaps the most persuasive demonstration yet seen on the British operatic stage that historical actuality can best be captured by deliberately distancing it. The "otherness" of the original conception cannot be approached directly or even conveniently spirited away, but must be acknowledged and put to use. As in Stein's earlier work, including Gorki's *Summerfolk* seen in London in 1977, he calls upon the scenery to declare its own theatricality. He is the master of a "super-realism" which simultaneously draws the audience into an illusory world and distances them from it. Stein will have taught the opera world an invaluable Brechtian lesson if his *Otello* can persuade it that the most promising route to a "faithful" performance is one which makes a virtue of the impossibility of convincing at the level of illusion: the director's task is boldly to define the true distance between our own time and that of the work itself.

The Welsh National Opera's *Otello* can be seen at the New Theatre, Cardiff on May 20, 23 and 27. The production will then travel to Bristol (June 10 and 13), Oxford (June 17 and 20), Birmingham (June 24 and 27) and Llandudno (July 1 and 4).

The Heartless Art by Tony Harrison

In Memoriam S. T., died 4th April, 1985

Death is in your house, but I'm out here
sackclothing kumquats against the forecast freeze,
filling the hole you took two days to clear
of briars, beercans, and bleached, barkless trees,
with hackberry leaves, pine needles, stuff like that.
Next spring, when you're no longer here
we'll have the land grassed over and quite flat.

When the Southern sun starts setting it sets fast.
I've time to tip one more load if I run.
Because I know this light could be your last
I drain the day of every drop of sun.
The barrow wheel spins round with a clock's tick.
I hear, three fields away, a hunter's gun,
you, in the silence after, being sick.

I watched you, very weak, negotiate
the childproof pill jar, panting to draw breath,
and when you managed it you poured your hate
more on the poured out contents than on death,
and, like Baptists uttering Beelzebub
syllable by syllable, spat *Meth-*
a-done, and there's also the poetic rub!

I've often heard my fellow poets (or those
who write in metres something like my own
with rhyme and rhythm, not in chopped-up prose
and brood on man's mortality) bemoan
the insufficiency of rhymes for death –
hence my syllabifying *Methadone*
instead of just saying that you fought for breath.

Maybe the main but not the only cause;
a piece of engineering I'll explain.
Each syllable was followed by a pause
for breathlessness, and scorn of drugs for pain.
Another reason, though, was to delay
the use of one more rhyme stored in my brain
that, alas, I'll have a use for any day.

I'd stored away this rhyme when we first met.
Knowing you crawled on hands and knees to prime
our water pump, I'll expiate one debt
by finally revealing that stored rhyme
that has the same relentlessness as death
that comes to every one of us in time
and comes to you this April full moon, SETH!

In return for all those oily working parts
you took the time and trouble to explain,
the pump that coughs, the saw that never starts,
I'll show you to distract you from the pain
you feel, except when napping, all the time
because you won't take drugs that dull the brain,
a bit about my metre, line and rhyme.

In Arthur Symons' *St. Teresa* Nazaréth
is stressed on the last against its spoken flow
to engineer the contrast Jesus/Death.
Do I endorse that contrast? I don't, no!
To have a life on Earth and then want Heaven
seems like that all night bar sign down below
that says that *Happy Hour*'s from 4 to 7.

Package lounges are like ambulances:
the Bourbon-bibber stares at us and glowers
at what he thinks are pained or pitying glances.
We don't see his face but he sees ours.
The non-dying don't see you but you see them
passing by to other rooms with flowers
as you fill the shining kidney with red phlegm.

I've left some spaces (   )[1]
benumbed by morphia and *Methadone*
until the (   )[2] of April, (   )[3].
When I began these lines could I have known
that the nurse's registration of the time
you let your spirit go with one last groan
would help complete the first and third line rhyme?

Those bits I added later. Them apart
I wrote this *in memoriam* for Seth,
meant to show him something of my art,
almost a whole week before his death.
The last thing the dying want to read,
I thought, 's a poem, and didn't show it,
and you, not dying yet, why should you need
to know the final failure of the poet?

1: how you stayed alive   2: 4th   3:10.05

A mortal turn

Peter Reading

ROY FULLER
Subsequent to Summer
64pp. Salamander Press, 18 Apley Road,
London W14 0BY. £5.95.
0 907540 72 4

"Iambics that keep falling in in threes" constituted *From the Joke Shop* a decade ago. That book's stimuli were domestic, quotidian – characteristic of most of Roy Fuller's work (as was manifest in the outstanding *New and Collected Poems* published last year). Little has changed. *Subsequent to Summer* maps the same territory – wrecked garden, moribund squabs, soporifics, palliatives, LPs . . . . From these origins spiral the universal cogitations on art and death.

The new book is structurally casual (the iambics here keep falling in in twos, as arbitrarily as they drilled in threes in the earlier volume). Simple arithmetical relationships suggest themselves in a "Prelude" – the poet's deceased mother's ninety-six years; allusion to Shostakovich's Twenty-four Preludes and Fugues as "The Shosty demi-Forty-eight . . . / A challenge to do the simpler thing with rhyme, / And even metres other than iambic". But we get forty-nine, not forty-eight, variations plus a coda, and the "challenge" is eschewed – iambic pentameters (Fuller's most comfy, eloquent medium) used throughout in groups of seven couplets that are (mostly unrhyming), sonnet-lengths, for each of the forty-nine:

> Thus music makes his poetry to the poet
> Disappointing; its arithmetic,
> Let alone melody, rudimentary
> Beside those infinitely halving strings.

This is the next episode, neither stale nor new. The poems themselves pre-empt commentary on them:

> "To be continued in our next" – the legend
> Promised more thrills or heart-ache in my youth.
> Yes, but one then was on the receiving end –
> Not doubting the creator's powers or life.

The typically droll self-scrutinizing is an old ingredient, as is the everyday subject-matter. The writer, "A seven-gilled [illegible] laboriously trained / To breathe pentameters", is fully aware of the strengths and weaknesses of his art. Despite the wistful reflection "Sometimes I can't help thinking: what a waste / If after my demise I were to be / Regarded as rather good, since I should quite / Have liked a modicum of celebrity", he's probably by now indifferent alike to favourable and unfavourable reviews (a bit of the appropriately obscure James Hurnard's *The Setting Sun*, 1870, is quoted as the epigraph for *Subsequent to Summer*, including: "Few men remain whose praise or blame I heed; / And so I write about myself with freedom"). But in steadfastly charting a modest seasonal and personal decline, Fuller conveys a feeling of more general, Hardyesque, profound, irrevocable loss. *From the Joke Shop* sensed that "August itself has undertones of Fall, / Some inexplicable, imperial, / Elgarian sadness", and in the present instalment "on bare twigs rain gathers like a tear, / Shed for the wreckage of imperial August / Rather belatedly, like many tears":

> What signifies the everyday in art?
> (And what, indeed, the everyday in life?)
> Some images of resemblance but more true,
> Must be pinned down [illegible]

Images here are pinned down memorably – "A house light is switched on, shines out, and makes / A stunning square-cut emerald of the lawn"; "The autumn crocus burns its jet of gas"; "The moon, a ghost all afternoon, by seven / Is falling in sparkles through still-foliaged trees". The statutory self-deprecating quips are often amusing ("Some girls now drop as though preparing for / Ju-jitsu: precaution needless in my case"; "What bosh I dream up at the end of day!"), but increasingly they take a sombre, mortal turn – "Death's harbingers will choke the jesting back". Nor is that mortality merely personal; it's for us all, and stoically chronicled with calm. Although it may be "Amazing to be losing full control / Of one's own body, so that parts one thought / Irrelevant may do one down", the broader, splendid conclusion obtains: "Great tragedy, existence; worth sitting through" (Again Hardy comes to mind.)

"Yet what's in art beyond the personal?" Or so I ask myself in my defence." Those of us by whom Roy Fuller certainly is "regarded as rather good" continue, with this latest achievement, to be moved by his lucid, personal iambics.

Shakespearean constructs

Inga-Stina Ewbank

Who, one asks, as one looks up at this pile of books*, is Shakespeare? A symbol of British culture, a construct by Freudian critics, a subversive politician, or even the author of *Edmund Ironside*? What is the status of his texts: are they editorial conspiracies, theatrical scenarios, gospels, or simply "the fetished literary text of orthodox criticism" (as Graham Holderness has it in *Shakespeare's History*)? When A. L. Rowse dedicates *Shakespeare's Self-Portrait* to "President Ronald Reagan for his historic honour to Shakespeare's profession", is he being ironic, and what exactly does he mean? With Flamineo, I am in a mist.

The most urbane voice among these authors is that of Samuel Schoenbaum, whose domain is the University of Maryland and the Folger Library – and, as the essays in *Shakespeare and Others* show, much of the rest of the world – and who both claims and proves that "scholarship should be fun for the practitioner". One of the most strident comes from the University of Stirling, as John Drakakis, in the introduction to *Alternative Shakespeares*, summons up resistance to "those strategies habitually mobilized by liberal humanism to draw into its ahistorical aegis an infinite variety of interpretations generated by individual sensibilities" and asks, "as a matter of extreme urgency", for new kinds of Shakespeare criticism. And without doubt the sanest sceptical voice, that of Harriett Hawkins, seems equally at home on both sides of the Atlantic. The often brilliant arguments of *The Devil's Party: Critical counter-interpretations of Shakespearian drama* help to clear many a mist and leave Shakespeare towering above his interpreters.

So the contours of the Shakespeare landscape as constructed by critics and scholars in the latter half of 1985 begin to emerge. The noisiest claim to have changed that landscape is in the very title of Eric Sams's edition of an anonymous and undated manuscript play in the British Library: *Shakespeare's Lost Play: Edmund Ironside*. Unfortunately the underpinning of that claim is doubly dubious: *Edmund Ironside* was not "lost" – indeed the latest edition of the text was published in 1965 – and Eric Sams does not produce convincing evidence that it was written by Shakespeare. If there is such a thing as a Shakespearean scholarly establishment, it certainly needs challenging, but not with alleged Shakespearean "echoes" and misrepresentations of evidence which dismantle themselves even as they are read. The book in the end reminded me of nothing so much as Nabokov's novel *Pale Fire*. The contrast between the play text (which occupies sixty pages) and the elaborate and polemical introduction (fifty-five pages), notes seventy-seven pages) and commentary (159 pages) raises questions about the relationship between fact and fiction similar to those in Charles Kinbote's "edition" of John Shade's poem.

No such questions are raised by David Thomas's useful compilation, *Shakespeare in the Public Records*. He claims no new discovery (though two of the references to Shakespeare's father were discovered as recently as April 1983) but describes and makes available the documentary evidence of Shakespeare and his family in the Public Record Office in London – raw material for social historians as well as biographers. A similar objectivity, in a book as clear as it is brief, is shown by George Walton Williams in *The Craft of Printing and the Publication of Shakespeare's Works*. Careful scholarship and a striking ability to select supportive illustrations make this book a must for anyone studying the production of Renaissance books.

Both these books provide a solid factual context for Shakespeare's works. One might expect something similar from Kenneth McLeish's *Longman Guide to Shakespeare's Characters: A Who's Who of Shakespeare*, but in fact it is difficult to see what purpose and readership it is meant to serve. It falls between the two stools of a dictionary and a study-guide of the pre-cooked kind. Apart from locating characters in plays, no objective information is given. Thus, in a page and a half on Antony there is no mention of North's Plutarch and no historical fact but instead a verbose and biased commentary, such as "because we know that he lacks the character-qualities to break the fetters, we feel a goosepimply, ironical satisfaction, a mixture of sympathy and 'I told you so', as we watch him struggle". At half the price of this volume, students at all levels could profitably acquire the revised and updated edition of Stanley Wells's *Shakespeare: An illustrated dictionary*, which includes a selective finding list of characters as a bonus additional to its wealth of concise factual information. The illustrations are often unusual, and they virtually add up to a Shakespearean stage history.

In the area between fact and interpretation, the collection of essays on *Pageantry in the Shakespearean Theatre*, edited by David M. Bergeron, makes a very welcome contribution to our knowledge of the relationship between London street pageantry and the drama of the period. That this is a fertile subject is well demonstrated by the editor's own essay on how the 1604 entry of King James provided both imagery and structure for *No Wit, No Help like a Woman's*, and how this play, in turn, mediated the images of Zeal and Envy for Middleton's first Lord Mayor's show, *The Triumphs of Truth*, in 1613. Among the Shakespearean contributions, Bruce R. Smith, in "Pageants into Play: Shakespeare's three perspectives on idea and image", suggests convincingly how differently, at three stages in his career, Shakespeare asks his audience to respond to pageant imagery. These essays do not have axes to grind and are all the more useful for it. They also indicate the strength of current American scholarship on emblematic aspects of Renaissance stagecraft.

Despite the title of his book, *New Perspectives on the Shakespearean World*, Richard Marienstras also refuses to waste time on polemics in what is an unusually thorough exploration of certain aspects of ideology in Shakespeare and some of his contemporaries. This book not only has by far the largest bibliography of those under consideration, but it also bases itself on by far the widest and best digested reading of modern critical theory. Unfussily, Marienstras shows his awareness of "the extent to which the work is rooted in its

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*Graham Holderness: *Shakespeare's History*. 243pp. Dublin: Gill and Macmillan; New York: St Martin's Press. £25.00. 0 312 71581 1.
A. L. Rowse: *Shakespeare's Self-Portrait*. 187pp. Macmillan. £20 (paperback, £7.95). 0 333 36661 1.
S. Schoenbaum: *Shakespeare and Others*. 285pp. Washington: The Folger Shakespeare Library; London: Scolar Press. £25. 0 85967 691 9.
John Drakakis (Editor): *Alternative Shakespeares*. 260pp. Methuen. £10.95 (paperback, £4.95). 0 416 36850 6.
Harriet Hawkins: *The Devil's Party: Critical counter-interpretations of Shakespearian drama*. 196pp. Oxford: Clarendon Press. £15. 0 19 812814 2.
Eric Sams (Editor): *Shakespeare's Lost Play: Edmund Ironside*. 383pp. Fourth Estate, 113 Westbourne Grove, London W2 4UP. £25. 0 947795 95 2.
David Thomas: *Shakespeare in the Public Records*. 48pp. HMSO. Paperback, £2.95. 0 11 440192 6.
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Kenneth McLeish: *Longman Guide to Shakespeare's Characters: A Who's Who of Shakespeare*. 264pp. Longman. £9.95. 0 582 89253 8.
Stanley Wells: *Shakespeare: An illustrated dictionary*. 216pp. Oxford University Press. Paperback, £4.95. 0 19 871075 5.
David M. Bergeron (Editor): *Pageantry in the Shakespearean Theater*. 251pp. Athens, Georgia: University of Georgia Press. $26. 0 8203 0716 5.
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Peter Erickson and Coppélia Kahn (Editors): *Shakespeare's "Rough Magic": Renaissance essays in honor of C. L. Barber*. 322pp. Newark: University of Delaware Press; London and Toronto: Associated University Presses. £26.50. 0 87413 247 9.
Peter Erickson: *Patriarchal Structures in Shakespeare's Drama*. 209pp. University of California Press. £25.75. 0 520 04806 7.
Carol Thomas Neely: *Broken Nuptials in Shakespeare's Plays*. 261pp. Yale University Press. £24. 0 300 03341 9.
Gary Taylor: *Moment by Moment by Shakespeare*. 263pp. Macmillan. £25. 0 333 37551 3.
William T. Betken (Editor): *Romeo and Juliet: The other Shakespeare*. 531pp. Rhinebeck, NY: Bardavon Books. $29.95 (paperback, $12.95). 0 941672 04 2.

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YALE UNIVERSITY PRESS
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PAT ROGERS REVIEWS THE FINAL VOLUME OF THE *OED* SUPPLEMENT IN THE REFERENCE BOOKS NUMBER
TLS – May 9

own time and to which the commentator belongs to his"; and, without laying into "ahistorical" critics, he aims to develop our ability "to sense that the past, although ours, is also a stranger to us". He examines ideas such as tyranny, sacrifice, art and nature, and a whole set of opposites structured on the ideas of the near and the far. The title of the French original of the book, *Le Proche et le lointain*, is perhaps apter than the English version; but the best in the book is also "new" – notably a fine analysis of incest in *'Tis Pity She's a Whore*. Most interesting, however, as anticipating work now being done on *The Tempest* on both sides of the Atlantic, is the chapter on "Elizabethan Travel Literature and Shakespeare's *The Tempest*". Here he quietly arrives at insights, much more loudly proclaimed by recent critics, into the possibility that *The Tempest* is a subversive work from a subversive age: "Shakespeare creates a dramatic system within which uncertainty is the rule and certainty an illusion produced by naivety or imposed by force".

Two collections of essays thrust their theoretical positions far more obtrusively at the reader. Indeed, as I have already indicated, in *Alternative Shakespeares* the editor, John Drakakis, suggests that the platform is the thing, though in fact his sparring with a selection of liberal humanists – Coleridge, Wilson Knight and L. C. Knights – is a good deal less successful than are some of the very varied "alternatives", ranging from semiotics (Alessandro Serpieri, rendered into English by Keir Elam) to the study of history and ideology by Jonathan Dollimore and Alan Sinfield. This last essay argues in a nutshell what Graham Holderness expands into a whole book, *Shakespeare's History*: that "a long tradition of idealist philosophy" has determined both the approach to history in Shakespeare and history's approach to Shakespeare.

The second volume of essays, *Shakespeare's "Rough Magic": Renaissance Essays in Honor of C. L. Barber*, has a more eclectic overall appearance because of its nature as a tribute. Peter Erickson, who has edited the volume with Coppélia Kahn, has written a moving memorial essay; and the scope and quality of C. L. Barber's impact on Shakespeare criticism – despite the relatively small quantity of his published output – is shown by the way each contributor can effortlessly relate his or her own work to some stimulus received from Barber. Anne Barton, in these terms, writes brilliantly on "Falstaff and the Comic Community"; and M. C. Bradbrook, in "London Pageantry and Lawyers' Theatre in the Early Seventeenth Century", stresses the interaction between every aspect of festive entertainment in London and Westminster. But the essays which dominate the volume, and which speak with very similar voices, base themselves on interests which Barber developed in the years after *Shakespeare's Festive Comedy*: on perspectives which Coppélia Kahn defines in her introduction as "psychological, social and historical, feminist, deconstructive".

It is a measure of the difference in critical climate on the two sides of the Atlantic that the editor of *Alternative Shakespeares* has to make such a song and dance about being alternative, while many of the essays in *Shakespeare's "Rough Magic"* take "new" approaches as a matter of course. Sometimes the English volume does it better. Terence Hawkes's "Swisser-Swatter: Making a man of English letters" demythologizes Shakespeare more effectively, and far more wittily, than the somewhat laborious and confessional essay by Peter Erickson entitled "Shakespeare and the 'Author-Function'". Catherine Belsey's essay, "Disrupting Sexual Difference: Meaning and gender in the comedies", is more discriminating, because more aware of the multiple models for the family prevailing in the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries, than the several essays of gender criticism in the American volume. What the American writers, for good and ill, have behind them is a community of like-minded critics. Janet Adelman's account, in a note, of the Special Session on Shakespeare and Psychoanalysis at the meeting of the Modern Language Association in San Francisco in December 1979, conveys a strong sense of a dawn when it was bliss to be alive. The appearance, at the same time as the Barber volume, of full-length studies by some of the contributors, testifies to the same community of ideas. Peter Erickson's *Patriarchal Structures in Shakespeare's Drama* extends both his own essay and Janet Adelman's, on "Male Bonding in Shakespeare's Comedies"; Carol Thomas Neely extends herself, from "Broken Nuptials in Shakespeare's Comedies" to *Broken Nuptials in Shakespeare's Plays*.

There is strength, of course, in this kind of unanimity, which both creates and satisfies its own critical climate. But there is also the danger of self-enclosedness. This is perceptible in the tendency to see the English Renaissance socio-historically as a single, monolithically patriarchal society: Lawrence Stone having replaced E. M. W. Tillyard as the interpreter of the age. The debate in contemporary historiography which shows the difficulty of assigning single and simple economic or ideological models to the early modern family – the work, for example, of English historians such as Keith Wrightson or Ralph A. Houlbrooke – seems not to have been heard of.

Part of the programme of this school of criticism is to decry a "stage-centred" as against a "text-centred" reading. Harry Berger, Jr, makes this the centre of his essay in the Barber volume, "Text against Performance: The Gloucester family romance". To Berger, the "constraints of performance . . . lead to a simplification or reduction of the interpretive possibilities of text-centred reading". Such a reading enables him to deconstruct the text, so that when, on stage, Cordelia's "no cause, no cause" commands wonder at her ability to forgive, "*reading* protests against this, 'cause, cause'". At this point one begins altogether to lose touch with what Shakespeare wrote, as against what philosophers of language may play with. That way madness lies.

The problem is, I think, that "text-centred" may become so issue-centred that not only performance but the actual words of the text are brushed aside. In *Patriarchal Structures*, Erickson, intent on finding unease about genders in *Antony and Cleopatra*, takes Cleopatra's words "Dost thou not see my baby at my breast / That sucks the nurse asleep?" to indicate that "Cleopatra's apotheosis explicitly converts the maternal image from life-giving nurturance into 'an easy way to die'". But he misquotes – "the baby" for "my baby" – and leaves out the "Peace, peace!" with which Cleopatra opens her speech and so, no doubt inadvertently, weakens the naturalistic image of a mother asking for peace and quiet not only for the sake of her suckling baby but also so as to be able herself to give in to the irresistible drowsiness which comes with nursing. The quality of felt life in this fictive situation would seem to tell a great deal more about Cleopatra's first-hand experience of motherhood than about her "misusing" the maternal image.

Against this removal (surely?) from Shakespeare, Gary Taylor's description of his experience of Cleopatra's death says more in two pages about the play, if not about gender criticism, than does Erickson in a whole chapter. Taylor is wearing an unusual cap in *Moment by Moment by Shakespeare*: he, if anyone, usually appears in print as text-centred, and it is a brave and unpretentious venture to set out, as he does, to show why he derives pleasure from reading and watching Shakespeare. If he is not strikingly original, he manages at least to keep both text and performance before us, exorcizing for some moments the unholy dichotomy between the two.

In the end it is perhaps the language of some of the new and alternative critics that most gets in the way of any sense of felt, as against theoretical, response to Shakespeare: the formulaic, efficient, managerial language that can refer to "the sexual and nurturant provisions Desdemona brings into the marriage" (Richard P. Wheeler, in the Barber volume). Such language tends to find the same thematic significance in everything. Edward Snow, writing in the Barber volume on "Language and Sexual Difference in *Romeo and Juliet*" quotes the Nurse on Juliet's response to "fallst upon thy face?", in order to illustrate Juliet's "capacity to say 'Ay' to necessity". It may be unfortunate that the same post that brought this volume also brought a volume of *Romeo and Juliet* in the amazing "Other Shakespeare" edition by William T. Betken, who thinks he has done a service to his contemporaries by rewriting Shakespeare's lines "to make the meaning, as distinct from the poetry, of Shakespeare's words accessible to the reader". In this text, the Nurse's husband says: "do you fall upon your face? You will fall backward when you grow up and meet a boy and so you'll lay then, will you not, Jule?" One wonders what phenomena of male bonding, patriarchal attitudes, etc, are revealed in our society, if Shakespeare's "when thou hast more wit" translates into "when you grow up and meet a boy"? Perhaps they are the same assumptions as reveal themselves in the prefaces to these books on sexual and political power, where strings of almost exclusively male names are thanked for their intellectual stimulus and advice, while an invariably female typist is thanked for typing. As Stephen Greenblatt says, in an essay in the Barber volume on "Renaissance Authority and its Subversion": "skeptical arguments about ideological causality always work against beliefs one doesn't hold". He is pursuing quite a different argument, in itself fascinating, about the possibility of subversive elements within apparently orthodox Renaissance texts; but it can equally well be turned on many of these studies.

No doubt it can also be turned against this review, and I hasten to say that I applaud the gains, even while lamenting the excesses, of criticism which brings back the author, and his family too, and which subverts until subversion itself becomes an orthodoxy. It is a good thing that so many radical questions are being asked at once. Perhaps every Shakespearean's prayer ought simply to be not to appear in Harriet Hawkins's footnotes as author of works of "mind-numbingly obvious conclusions". One might do well to join her in finding "a cause for general celebration, not despair" in the sheer futility of the search for some unified theory of knowledge of Shakespearean drama. Perhaps the best recipe, like hers, is a mixture of scepticism and fideism. The critics abide our question, but Shakespeare is free.

"A Health to all Vintners, Beer-brewers and Aletonners. . .", a detail from a woodcut used as decoration for a number of broadsides and ballads in the seventeenth century. It is reproduced from J. A. Sharpe's Crime and Law in English Satirical Prints 1600–1832 *(312pp. Chadwyck-Healey. £38. 0 85964 176 7).*

That soul of whim

David Nokes

CHRISTINE PHIPPS (Editor)
Buckingham: Public and private man: The prose, poems and commonplace book of George Villiers, second Duke of Buckingham (1628–1687)
346pp. Garland. £45.
0 8240 5455 5

George Villiers, second Duke of Buckingham, occupies an unfortunate niche in the literary pantheon, alongside such figures as Lewis Theobald and Elkanah Settle – all authors more memorable as satiric characters in the works of others than as the creators of their own. Dryden's portrait of Zimri catches exactly the Duke's chameleon moods and volatile enthusiasms:

> A man so various, that he seem'd to be
> Not one, but all mankind's epitome.
> Stiff in opinions, always in the wrong;
> Was everything by starts, and nothing long:
> But, in the course of one revolving moon,
> Was chymist, fidler, states-man and buffoon.

It was a description which evidently stung Buckingham acutely. In his epigram "To Mr Dryden" he protested against it as a piece of evil witchcraft:

> As witches images of wax invent
> To torture those theyr bid to represent
> So thy ill made resemblance wasts my fame.

Yet this new edition of Buckingham's prose and poems serves only to confirm the accuracy of Dryden's portrait. A large part of the collection is taken up with entries from Buckingham's commonplace book which reveal a magpie mind, forever flitting from gaudy simile to glittering epigram. This commonplace book is like a props-cupboard of Restoration wit. In it we find stored the disembodied sallies of dramatic repartee, a ghostly thesaurus of quips in search of a character, a wardrobe of well-dressed *bons mots* with nowhere to go. Some of the epigrams are succinct and witty; "The strangest fellow, he's all core and paring" – others are trite: "Ugly as sins appear when men repent". Most are derivative. The overall effect of this anthology of aphorisms is sad, pointing to a life whose highest endeavour is the turning of fine phrases. One of the first entries, on beauty, runs: "Her beautyes are like a booke of sentences, pretty things, but they don't hang together". It is a fitting description of the commonplace book itself.

The most sustained item in this collection is an unfinished fragment of a heroic play featuring Liberius, Count of Narbonne, and Theoderic, Prince of Pannonia. While it would be unfair to judge the play's potential on the two scenes presented here, it is hard to resist the feeling that this is precisely the kind of rodomontade which Buckingham ridiculed in his only really successful literary work, *The Rehearsal*. Indeed, the sense of incipient self-parody is inescapable in many of the self-regarding sallies of this would-be wit.

It is difficult to know for whom this edition is intended. One might suppose that few but specialists in Restoration literature would be likely to seek out the minor works and jottings of an author whom Pope described as "superficial in everything". The unlovely camera-ready typescript and compendious textual notes are surely sufficient to deter the casual browser. Yet Christine Phipps's introduction is full of simplistic remarks which presuppose a complete ignorance of the period. Thus the reader is warned against making anachronistic political assumptions. Buckingham, she writes, "may have defended the constitutional power of parliament . . . but that does not mean that he wished to abolish the monarchy, and he certainly would not have favored universal male suffrage (let alone giving votes to women)".

For the most part her introduction is a breathless catalogue of names and dates, a historical digest with little effort at critical interpretation or biographical insight. It is particularly disappointing that, having devoted so much attention to Buckingham's writings, Phipps should not have attempted to provide a more perceptive analysis of a career which was viewed by both Dryden and Pope as the perfect illustration of Restoration mores: "That life of pleasure, and that soul of whim".

Wind and stink

Christopher Hawtree

JOHN BOWEN
The Girls
182pp. Hamish Hamilton. £8.95.
0241 11867 0

John Bowen's early group of novels was completed in 1965 with *A World Elsewhere*, which attempted, not entirely satisfactorily, a parallel between Greek myth and the life of a disgraced politician; Bowen used a similar device in his first novel, *The Truth Will Not Help Us*, where a rigged eighteenth-century trial is echoed by modern-day American witch-hunts. He broke two decades' fictional silence in 1983, with *Squeak*, the biography of a pigeon.

The two novels he has published in quick succession since then, *The McGuffin*, a chilling series of Hitchcockian encounters, and now *The Girls*, are no less fantastic, but so plausibly told that they are on a level with *The Birdcage* and *The Centre of the Green*, in which reality is neatly and wittily heightened but never vanishes into the clouds. Death, which stalked the pages of *The Centre of the Green* from an opening suicide attempt to a thwarted abortion and closing stroke, resurfaced throughout *The McGuffin*, but it has never been as grimly beguiling as it is in *The Girls*.

A brief opening chapter refers in a jocular way to something nasty in a septic tank at the bottom of the garden owned by Jan and Susan somewhere in the West Midlands. Although it is not yet clear that this is where they have chosen to keep an unfortunate young man, any puzzlement that it arouses is quickly dispelled as one's attentions turn to an account of a pig which escapes *en route* to the stud-farm. This may be worlds away from the Empress of Blandings, but Bowen's use of language has the mastery of a Wodehouse. The words fall without fuss and with the relish which comes from knowing that they will carry the author across any unexpected developments he might encounter. Careful organization brings impeccable havoc.

If not exactly intelligent, Mrs Marshall has a deep-rooted native wit: alone among the villagers, she realizes why the tank is blocked.

> A more efficient one might have digested Alan with no great difficulty, nor any eructation of wind and stink, but the primitive construction of the girls' septic tank was not up to such a task. Alan was a solid far larger than any in its experience. It would take time to digest him. Meanwhile he stank.

Time, one might say, is of the essence. The pig having run amok in the girls' chintzy shop, Bowen quickly draws together the threads of his story. With equal despatch one of the girls is impregnated at a Craft Fair by a young man whose partner deals in musical instruments. A child, Butch, results, and, in defiance of the medical profession, is duly brought up by the girls. Time brings in its revenges. The intricacies of decomposition and – worse – schizophrenia are conveyed with a panache that only a churl could fail to enjoy. For all this (not to mention a *bourrée* by Handel and a television appearance by Gore Vidal), *The Girls* is an affectionate picture of country life, and an account of companionable domesticity made all the more moving for the way in which it is thwarted.

Fearful prophecies

Philip Smelt

HANS KONING
Acts of Faith
182pp. Gollancz. £8.95.
0 575 03744 X

Hans Koning's *Acts of Faith* is a tormented novel. The central character, John Balthasar, inhabits a world of missed opportunities and shadowy threats. As an American freelance journalist in 1973 he was involved in an attempt to smuggle a Basque nationalist across the border from Franco's Spain into France. Fearing the consequences, Balthasar pulled out of the escape plan at the last minute and ever since then he has been plagued by feelings of guilt at his faint-heartedness.

Now, ten years later and working as a librarian in New York, Balthasar comes across some exiled members of the Basque group. They appear to have survived their trans-Atlantic move and undergone a shift towards an improbably right-wing organization.

Balthasar's understandable confusion is compounded by his mental fragility, which gives him terrifying nightmares and paranoid fears. He believes that he is being harassed by a Spanish anti-communist gang that operates in the United States as the agent of some modern inquisition and enacts a barbaric *auto-da-fé* in Balthasar's troubled dreams.

As well as immersing himself in ancient volumes of European Christian literature and flirting with psychoanalysis and Roman Catholic confessionals, Balthasar attempts to track down the vicious proponents of the new moral and political crusade, shrouded in mystery and enjoying the protection of the American police and the FBI.

There are many ingredients in *Acts of Faith*, including the Basque separatist movement, the dangers of rabid anti-communism, and the excesses of strident religious belief; topics which sit uneasily side by side in a narrative that fails to bring them together.

Palpably flawed

Brian Morton

LOUIS AUCHINCLOSS
Honourable Men
278pp. Weidenfeld and Nicolson. £8.95.
0297 78796 9

"Why? Why did a man brought up as I had been, a gentleman born and bred, after so many years of straight conduct, suddenly become a thief? And why did I feel no remorse?" This, from *The Embezzler* (1966), gives a fair idea of Louis Auchincloss's "psychological" vein. He has now published a staggering twenty-eight novels, the best known of them undoubtedly *Portrait in Brownstone* (1962). They are all done in the same curiously forensic style, but with turns of plot and mental agonies that might seem more appropriate to a television blockbuster than to "serious" fiction. The (sometimes precariously) moneyed world he writes about, the world of New York "society" and business, is closer to *Dynasty* than to Edith Wharton; his insights into the world of work belong with the Carringtons and Ewings rather than with the Howellses or Dreisers.

Honourable Men suggests another instance of Auchincloss's members-of-the-jury rhetoric: these, *these*, are honourable men? The novel follows the courtship, marriage and eventual divorce of Alida Struthers, daughter of a rapidly depreciating New York family, and Charles "Chip" Benedict, handsome scion of Connecticut glassware millions and palpably the Boy Who Has Everything.

In a fizzy first person, Alida describes her threadbare family life, her carefully orchestrated "Season" and her brief engagement to Jonathan Askew, whom she eventually jilts. Intervening chapters offer a more detached background to Chip's life and prospects. As the marriage wanes, Auchincloss's attention veers. He loses touch with Alida and her narrative becomes an uneasy litany of crises, alcohol, adultery and wayward children. Chip, who never fully emerges as a character, becomes increasingly problematic as he takes centre stage.

That he is not to be taken at face value is signalled pretty strongly from the outset, and the bulk of the novel recounts the slow triumph of Chip's will over his morbid adolescent religiosity, his scruples and his friends. While a pupil at his grandfather's boarding school, he is implicated in a mild homosexual scandal and lies to save both skin and inheritance. Years later, he coldly destroys his schoolfriend's legal career on the pretext of an act of perfectly innocent plagiarism. The Second World War hero and nascent Cold Warrior eventually – in another of Auchincloss's unbuttressed psychological shifts – resigns his government post over Vietnam. By this stage, he and Alida have parted and their children have become anti-war activists. The novel's end finds Alida in Sweden with her draft-dodger son, musing rather ponderously on the by-products of New England puritanism.

This is as consciously literary – echoes of Hawthorne – as the novel's set pieces are consciously and eccentrically "Shakespearian". Chip is an uneasy mix of Brutus and Coriolanus (with a growing hint of Auchincloss's favourite theme, the "motiveless malignity" of Iago), Alida both Virgilia and Portia, his mother Volumnia; behind it all, intrusively, is Auchincloss in the guise of both Antony and Caesar, master rhetorician and grim nemesis.

Mucor and mayhem

Jeanette Winterson

ROBERT IRWIN
The Limits of Vision
120pp. Viking. £8.95.
0 670 80797 4.

Dirt has not been among the memorable themes of modern literature; fate has left it to Robert Irwin to show us fear in a handful of dust. When the last Hoover is broken we will find ourselves citizens of the only lasting empire, filth all round us. For Marcia, a south London housewife and mathematics graduate (she keeps her imaginary numbers in different rooms in the house), the implications of the ever-reproducing kingdom of Mucor are all too clear.

Mucor, a piece of fungus, is the spokesthing for grit, understains, mould etc. Wherever Marcia hopes to clean she finds Mucor in one of his many disguises. Fortunately, alone in the house day after day, Marcia discovers she has friends; Blake, Dickens, Leonardo, de Hooch, even Darwin rally round to help her fight the dirt; not that they're much help. Their spectral selves, like their living selves, are all theory. Leonardo likes sitting in the bath watching the dirty water run down the plug-hole, while Dickens on all fours can impersonate a vacuum-cleaner but can't fix one.

Even so, these friends are preferable to her coffee-morning cronies who expect the washing up to be done and the beds to be made before the sacred hour of gossip. In their company, as in her husband's, Marcia feels gagged; she wants to talk, not about Art, but about Dirt, the impossibility of ever being clean, of ever achieving the dizzy standards of the Institute of Whiteness.

Is Marcia making a quantum leap across time and the level of the everyday or is she nuts? As her day wears on and both sets of visitors disappear, Mucor's whisperings become sinister: Doesn't she know that husband Philip is having an affair with coffee-morning Stephanie? Doesn't she know that the man from the Institute, so keen to get her views on understains, is really a doctor sent to certify her?

Irwin has created his character so artfully that we get a ring-side seat behind her eyes but no objective viewpoint, so the ending is perfectly ambiguous. Clearly the novel is a flight of fancy; but since the world is made up of a consensus of fancy, we only have to believe in Marcia to believe in her world. Disbelief is tantalizingly allowed here and there, to make us thoroughly confused. Irwin is an irrepressibly clever writer but never irritating. The book binds together philosophy and mayhem, a welcome relief from the many dreary contemporary novels about adultery and big business. With its *Wizard of Oz*-style farewell and a central character who can make an Arctic tundra out of a rumpled sheet, *The Limits of Vision* ranks as a genuine (and rare) work of the imagination.

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Scuttlings and skewerings

Reginald Hill

RAY HARRISON
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Guardian Angel
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Mosley Went to Mow
156pp. £7.95.
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J. C. S. SMITH
Nightcap
244pp. £8.95.
0 7043 2511 X
Quartet.

Ray Harrison must view the current City of London clean-up campaign with some complacency, having set his Sergeant Bragg and Constable Morton on the priestlike task some hundred years ago. In *Death of a Dancing Lady*, an everyday story of barratry and bottomry, the *Dancing Lady* turns out to be a ship disappeared, probably scuttled, off Poza Rica, and the two City policemen find themselves involved in the incredibly complex world of maritime insurance. That may not sound a bundle of fun, but expertise, expertly explained, is always fascinating, and Harrison also offers a wide range of other pleasures. Through the eyes of young Morton, returning from playing for England in Australia, we get a glimpse of life in Victorian America as he investigates that end of the case. From Ryan, the sole witness of the scuttling, we get a good old-fashioned nautical yarn of stowing away and dirty deeds on the high seas. And before we're finished, we come right up to date with Special Branch involvement and political dirty tricks. Old friends appear, like Catherine Marsden, the young journalist, trying to make her way in a profession even more certain then than now that a woman's place is elsewhere. But new readers need not be frightened by old friends. Harrison knows that each of his Sergeant Bragg books has got to stand up for itself, and *Death of a Dancing Lady* may send you back to the earlier ones for enjoyment, but never understanding. Low in key, high in readability, these City police stories illustrate that in the old crime-writers' trinity of sex, violence and money, not the least engrossing is money.

Weirdest of modern "heroines" must be Anthea Cohen's Nurse Carmichael, who in *Guardian Angel* once more demonstrates her own, one hopes, inimitable technique for dealing with the problems of hospital life. These include a smelly left-wing head porter, who is luring nurses away from the vocational, no-strike College of Nursing to his much more militant union, and a pair of foul-mouthed, pot-smoking punks who don't care a catheter for hospital rules. Cross Charles Bronson's avenger in *Death Wish* with Miss Marple and you might get something like Nurse – now Sister – Carmichael. All the fascinating detail of hospital life which makes the television "soaps" and the Mills and Boon romances so popular is here, but without the soft underbelly. "In the grand tradition of P. D. James" says a critical quote on the jacket. I can't agree. There's no puzzle, no detection here. If anything, *Guardian Angel* is in the much more esoteric tradition of Patricia Highsmith. It leaves you uncomfortably uncertain of what you feel, whom you sympathize with.

John Greenwood's Inspector Mosley is a pretty odd character too. His patch is the high moorlands area of the Yorkshire–Lancashire border, whose geographical remoteness is mirrored in Mosley's self-distancing from the bureaucratic hierarchy of the police force. Old fans will be delighted at his reappearance in *Mosley Went to Mow*, except that in fact he hardly reappears at all.

But something odd is going on in Mosley country. There's a gallows for sale and Janice Goodwin has vanished, leaving behind her a wrecked living room and a quart Guinness bottle stained with congealed blood and a few wisps of grey hair. Superintendent Grimshaw reluctantly admits that the man to get to the bottom of this is the absent-on-leave Inspector, and Sergeant Beamish, a young man whose offensive brightness is compounded by a certain empathy with Mosley, is set to tracking him down. Intermittently, and enigmatically, they make contact, till his unpredictable quarry takes off to visit his sister in Kenya, vanishing almost completely from the last third of the novel. Yet everything that happens, has happened, or will happen in the aptly named Hemp Valley is touched with Mosley's rough magic. I am sure that fans will be delighted with the sense of his presence even when he's not there. Newcomers, however, might find themselves disadvantaged by their lack of previous acquaintance and feel that the book is rather too self-consciously quirky and lacks proper detective "body". This would be a shame. Greenwood should perhaps remember that "series" characters must always be winning new converts as well as delighting old. And besides, Mosley is too marvellous a character for his mere spiritual presence to be completely satisfying.

Quentin Jacoby, first person narrator of J. C. Smith's *Nightcap*, is quite another sort of policeman, or rather ex-policeman. A former transit cop (ie a member of the force that polices New York's subway system), he is persuaded as a favour to a friend to act as security officer in a top restaurant where, barely an hour after he first clocks on, he finds John Lombardo, his new employer, skewered on a brass brochette. Suspects, because they are also on the premises, are the gorgeous black reservations manager, Janine DuPage, and an equally gorgeous young man called Angel Ruiz who works in the kitchen. What they have in common besides being under suspicion is that they're both Lombardo's lovers. There is a third suspect, Jacoby himself. This, and personal pride, make him determined to get to the truth of the murder. The result is an exciting, intriguing, eminently readable, downbeat private-eye novel, with interesting and believable characters all seen through the compassionate and very human private eye of Jacoby, who is neither super-tough, super-cynical nor super-brilliant. This may not make for best selling, but it certainly makes for entertaining reading.

Criminal proceedings

T. J. Binyon

DICK FRANCIS
Break In
272pp. Michael Joseph. £8.95.
0 7181 2597 5

Dick Francis's latest novel is a cross between *Romeo and Juliet* and *Twelfth Night*. Holly Fielding marries Bobby Allardeck, bringing together two racing families that have hated one another for generations. Better off than Juliet, Holly has a twin brother, steeplechase jockey Kit, resourceful, as tough as old boots, and a telepath who communicates with his mounts, his sister and his girl. When a vicious newspaper campaign threatens to destroy Bobby's training stable he rides to the rescue and metagrobolizes an array of power-crazed financiers. It's good that Dick Francis, after excursions into the wine trade, security services and merchant banking, should have returned to the racing world. His story-telling is as fluent, his tone as relaxed, and his judgment of pace as impeccable as ever before. But the skills are harnessed to what must be his most preposterous plot and most ludicrous love affair.

JULIAN SYMONS
The Criminal Comedy of the Contented Couple
220pp. Macmillan. £7.95.
0 333 39718 6

Julian Symons's new novel opens in Headfield, a prosperous little consumers' paradise in the Home Counties. Local society is pleasantly agitated by a series of anonymous letters which allege that travel agent Derek Crowley is deceiving his wife Sandy and having an affair with Gerda, the wife of his partner Charles Porson. Meanwhile, Derek's friend Jason Durling, a buttoned-up bachelor and civil servant who is working on a biography of Dante Milton Cruddle, one of the more obscure English novelists, is excited at the prospect of at last obtaining an interview with his aged subject. He travels to Venice, on a trip arranged by the PC agency; the two couples accompany him. But his meeting with Cruddle proves a fiasco, several odd things happen, and when the party returns from Venice it leaves two of its number behind on the mortuary slab.

Symons sets the scene so brilliantly, paints such a savagely comic picture of Headfield and its colour supplement [illegible] second half of the novel and the crimes which are its *raison d'être* almost come as an anti-climax. In fact, of course, they don't, for they are as intriguing, if in a different way, as the rest of the book; and the discovery which Jason, who has turned from biography to detection, makes at the end of the novel does come as a very distinct shock. The novel is certainly as civilized and witty as anything Julian Symons has written.

K.C. CONSTANTINE
The Man Who Liked to Look at Himself
164pp. Hodder and Stoughton. £9.95.
0 340 37249 4

Five seconds after setting out, Mario Balzic, the Rocksburg chief of police, is already deeply regretting that he ever agreed to go hunting with Lieutenant Minyon, the new chief of detectives of the state police, after Minyon's ill-trained Weimeraner gives him a shrewd nip on the hand. The dog ignores pheasants, puts up starlings, trees squirrels and finally unearths half a human thigh bone which has been buried not too long ago. And the dog's owner turns out to be just as big a pain in the ass when Balzic tries to find out who has been sawn up into small bits and scattered over most of Pennsylvania. This is K. C. Constantine's third novel about the half-Serbian, half-Italian Balzic to be published here – there are still three more which have only appeared in the United States – and it may be the best so far. The story is grim, but laced with humour, the demotic dialogue superb, and there's a free gift at the end in the shape of the author's credo as a crime writer.

ANTHONY PRICE
Here Be Monsters
255pp. Gollancz. £8.95.
0 575 03742 3

When Ed Parker, former major in the US Army, is pitched over a cliff on the French coast the day after the anniversay of D-Day, interest is reawakened in the Debrecen List, that roll-call of possible deep agents which has been troubling British Intelligence and the CIA since 1958. Horse-faced Elizabeth Loftus, daughter of a naval VC, an Oxford hockey blue with a first in History who was recruited into the service by Paul Mitchell at the end of *The* [illegible] given the task of checking the suspects out yet again. Anthony Price's thrillers have tended to be stronger on ratiocination than action, and here he stretches his method to its limits: *Here Be Monsters* is a dense mass of logical inferences, so microscopically observed that the narrative takes about the same time to read as it does to unfold. But it's a brilliant *tour de force*, with the intellectual argument providing more excitement than another writer might get out of a squadron of tanks.

LILLIAN DE LA TORRE
Dr Sam: Johnson, Detector
259pp. Macmillan. £7.95.
0 333 39882 3

"*Being*", as the sub-title, a better description of the book than any review could be, has it, "a light-hearted collection of Recently reveal'd Episodes *in the Career of the* Great Lexicographer narrated as from the pen of James Boswell. *Including*: the Unmasking of the *Flying Highwayman*; the singular Episode of the *Monboddo* Ape Boy; the Recovery of Prince *Charlie's* vanisht Ruby, the stolen *Christmas* Box, and the pilfer'd Great Seal of *England*; also, the Detection of the mysterious Visitant in *Mincing Lane*, and the macabre Affair of the Wax-Work Cadaver." Lillian de la Torre's collection of Johnsonian detective stories first appeared in 1946, and was certainly worth reprinting. Though the plots are occasionally a little thin, the stylization is learned and charming, and Johnson himself is treated with respectful affection.

PETER O'DONNELL
Dead Man's Handle
235pp. Souvenir Press. £8.95.
0 285 62702 3

Modesty Blaise and Willie Garvin in another curious caper, this time taking on the Hostel of Righteousness, a fake religious sect on a small Aegean island run by Dr Thaddeus Pilgrim, a sadistic maniac ex-missionary, whose retinue of professional assassins includes Dixon, "one of the most able killers Eton had ever produced". The ritual final conflict is a gladiatorial *secutor* versus *retiarius*, sword and shield against trident and net. Peter O'Donnell has a fecund imagination; he spices his narratives with a good deal of humour and never pretends that his plots have anything particular to do with the real world. *Dead Man's Handle* is as vividly macabre as any of Modesty's earlier adventures, though the picture of her on the dust jacket is a ridiculous travesty.

FRANK PARRISH
Fly in the Cobweb
160pp. Constable. £6.95.
0 09 466690 3

Fly in the Cobweb is the sixth story about Dan Mallett, that cunning little countryman with an accent thicker than that of any of Hardy's rustics. He gets into the cobweb by witnessing a murder while committing a burglary, has to take refuge with the members of a symposium of performing arts, and is rescued by pretty Sukie Bush from Florida and her domineering Aunt Helen. Neat, but not gaudy, with less nature and more people than usual.

GEORGETTE HEYER
Footsteps in the Dark
289pp. Grafton. £8.95.
0 246 12760 0

Footsteps in the Dark was Georgette Heyer's first detective story, originally published in 1932. The plot is indescribably ridiculous. Four bright young things – 2m, 2f – inherit an ancient, rambling manor house in the country, complete with ruined gothic chapel, secret passages, ghosts, master criminals, drug-crazed French artists, bumbling local policemen and mysterious clean-cut hero. She was to do far better than this. Nevertheless, both characters and narration are still bright and effervescent enough to keep one going through the worst the story has to offer.

TED WOOD
Dead Centre
205pp. Collins. £7.50.
0 00 231965 9

The police force of Murphy's Harbour – Reid Bennett and his Alsatian Sam – is hired to look after a little security problem in Toronto. As usual, one thing leads to another, and Bennett ends up taking on, single-handed, a well-organized Chinese Triad gang and a succession of pint-sized martial arts experts. Fast, solid and competent, but somehow Bennett is better in his own back-yard; and does Sam get enough exercise?

Empiricism expounded

Anthony O'Hear

JOHN FOSTER
A. J. Ayer
307pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £21.
0 7102 0602 X

John Foster's book on A. J. Ayer is the latest contribution to the Arguments of the Philosophers series. As is now to be expected from the series, the argumentation is detailed and the writing at a high level of philosophical sophistication. The book is definitely not an introduction to Ayer's thought for the uninitiated, but it is entirely proper that Ayer is accorded serious treatment, in a work of book length. As Foster rightly says in his conclusion, Ayer has been the leading promoter of the empiricist viewpoint over the last fifty years, and it is difficult to imagine a more authoritative exposition of empiricism.

Nevertheless, the book's many merits notwithstanding, I cannot suppress a slight feeling of disappointment that the excitement and sharpness of insight which Ayer's philosophy can and so often does generate are not always recaptured. At times, the intricate discussions of points arising out of Ayer's positions are too tortuous and their direction is uncertain. Ayer's arguments are discussed, but not his overall vision; which is a pity, because it is plausible to suppose that, despite considerable changes in the detail of Ayer's thought since *Language, Truth and Logic* (1936), the underlying insights and motivations have remained constant.

This is partly a reflection of Foster's choice of balance and subject-matter. Long though the book is, nearly two thirds of it is devoted to discussions of the verification principle in *Language, Truth and Logic* and the analyses of scepticism and sense-data in *The Problem of Knowledge* (1956). By contrast, there is only the most perfunctory treatment of the fascinating defence of epistemological realism in *The Central Questions of Philosophy* (1974), something which Dummett, Strawson and Armstrong all chose to concentrate on in their contributions to Ayer's *Festschrift* in 1979. Foster surely should have said more about this, first because Ayer sees his *Central Questions* position as superseding his earlier epistemologies, and secondly because the type of relationship between sense data and physical object statements adumbrated in *Central Questions* cannot be supposed to be a straightforward example of the less primitive being justified by or constructed out of the more primitive. These are points on which I find Ayer's own discussion bafflingly brief and in need of just the sort of painstaking elaboration Foster provides for other, more familiar elements of Ayer's philosophy.

This said, Foster's treatment of the verification principle in his first chapter is one of the best and most conclusive things in the book. He shows that the principle is either too weak to have any bite, if it is construed as saying merely that meaningful statements must be only loosely based on or supported by empirical evidence, for this would allow in all sorts of experience-transcending entities; or too strong, if it holds that the content of meaningful statements must be reducible to experience. It is clearly this latter interpretation that Ayer requires in *Language, Truth and Logic*, and which generates the commitment to phenomenalism in that work. But when spelled out it turns out to be untenable, because even if we require all primitive *terms* of meaningful sentences to be definable ostensively or empirically – something that might seem sensible in itself, as well as being the most promising basis for verificationism – it does not follow that we cannot construct perfectly grammatical *sentences* out of them, whose meaning transcends any possible sense content.

Foster also (very briefly) defends a version of intuitionism with regard to logic and mathematical truth against the conventionalism of *Language, Truth and Logic*; but he does not take with full seriousness Ayer's own assertion to the effect that giving way on that issue would entail upsetting the main argument of *Language, Truth and Logic*. Neither here, nor with the failure of the verificationism with regard to synthetic statements, does Foster ever consider systematically what needs to be considered, which is the very status of a sense-datum starting-point in epistemology in the absence of a supporting theory of meaning (it is presumably on this question that Ayer thought *Language, Truth and Logic* went beyond the Humean empiricism of which he saw that work as a logical development).

Foster's own position on both sense data and empiricism more generally appears, at least from *A. J. Ayer*, to be ambivalent in a way that seriously unbalances his discussion of Ayer. For while, in considering *The Problem of Knowledge* in his second chapter, he defends Ayer in taking sense data as the starting-point for epistemology, he attacks Ayer in the third and final chapter (which deals with induction, natural necessity, selves, persons and free will) for an "excessive" austerity engendered by his empiricism, which leads him (Ayer) to regard the notions of objective necessitation, the substantial ego, absolute morality and God as outmoded myths (in contrast, Ayer has recently come to see the notion of free will, understood in a libertarian sense, as muddled but "salutary"). The trouble with Foster's treatment of Ayer is that it lacks just that sustained analysis of empiricism which might lead us to see how, despite appearance, there is no tension between the various positions Foster himself takes in discussing Ayer. All we get are, in the second chapter, the highly controversial, but there unsupported claim that all epistemological justification must be in terms of what is either self-evident or present in one's current mental state, and, underlying a lot of the other issues, the claim (made explicitly in his final rejection of the verificationism of *Language, Truth and Logic*) that where our common language and intuitions point strongly in one direction, the onus is very much on the sceptic to show that they are actually discredited or muddled, not simply that it is possible that they might be.

Many philosophers would, of course, take issue with Foster and Ayer on just these grounds – over the narrowness of their shared epistemological starting-point. (It is, however, open to question whether Ayer's was actually as narrow as he officially states: as Foster points out, even in *The Problem of Knowledge* Ayer has to allow memory of past sensation to play a greater role in his refutation of scepticism, which proceeds via an appeal to the power of external-world statements to explain our sensations, than Foster himself is prepared to allow.) Others, following Wittgenstein, would question whether a sense-datum language would be viable at all if it were not parasitic on a public language dealing with publicly observable enduring objects. Ayer clearly regards such a claim as a threat to his epistemological starting-point; Foster, strangely, does not even discuss Ayer's handling of the private language argument. What he does discuss, after lengthy but very worthwhile examinations of the nature of scepticism and the ways to counter it, and of two different approaches to the question of when someone has the right to be sure of some proposition (one when it is claimed that he has arrived at it by a "truth-reliable" method, and the other when he actually has reasons for believing it), is the validity of the argument from hallucinations to sense-data.

This argument holds that if a veridical experience is indistinguishable experientially from a hallucination, then veridical experiences are, in some epistemologically relevant sense, indirect relative to physical objects. But this conclusion is surely not necessary: similar psychological states can be caused in different ways, and the fact that I can sometimes think I am perceiving an object when I am actually stimulated by aberrant brain activity does not show that I do not sometimes perceive an object directly in the sense that there is nothing more primitive in my experience than the object itself. Foster has difficulty with this point, despite a most interesting discussion of indirectness of perception, falling back in the end on the highly questionable claim that we are aware of a primitive presentational contact in experience which we then interpret as an experience of an object. And, unlike Ayer, he then goes on to question the legitimacy of our objective interpretations of experience. He raises a doubt both about one's entitlement to talk about an actual sensory order if one limits one's point of view to any current state of mind, and about the need to explain such a thing, if it exists, and even about the need to explain our beliefs about the physical world in terms of an external world rather than in Berkeleian terms – or even in terms of a Cartesian malignant demon systematically deceiving us.

In criticizing Ayer's empiricist rejection of natural necessity, on the other hand, Foster makes so free a hand with the argument from best explanation as to dispense with all empiricist scruples altogether. He says that the order we perceive in the world is best explained by appeal to natural laws necessitating the regularity we perceive. Here, though, empiricist caution is surely in order: does Foster really think that past perceived regularities can or will never fail? And if he is not prepared to say this, it is unclear what role talk of natural necessity is playing. Any substantive appeal to natural necessity, such as Foster envisages, is likely to prove far too much about what "has" to happen in the future (but which, nevertheless, may not). Ayer's espousal of empiricism in this area can hardly be described as excessive. Whether it is excessive on the self, or morality, on logic and on God, Foster's book makes it hard to judge – in the absence of any sustained attempt to explain what he takes to be the nature or limits of empiricism – whether a truly empiricist philosophy has to approach the external world via sense data, or whether it could not be equally empiricist and in other ways less problematic to adopt a firmly physicalist starting point.

Changes in time

J. E. Tiles

LAWRENCE BRIAN LOMBARD
Events: A metaphysical study
272pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £25.
0 7102 0354 3

Can we take it that anyone who accepts that Mount St Helens erupted also accepts that there was an eruption and hence that there are such things as events (over and above such things as volcanoes and rivers of lava)? Lawrence Brian Lombard favours the answer "yes", but does not take it upon himself to offer any new arguments for it. Such arguments would, he believes, have to arise from an "inquiry into meaning". For example, twenty years ago Donald Davidson argued that in order to understand how adverbs and prepositional phrases can be attached to (and detached from) verbs, we must take it that sentences which report what happens commit us to the existence of events. But arguments of this sort do not tell us what an event is, nor what makes two expressions report the same event rather than different events. It is the latter questions to which Lombard addresses himself.

The answer to the first question is that events are changes of a quite specific kind. They are processes, ie they take an interval of time; there are no instantaneous changes. Events are, moreover, non-relational changes: all reports of relational changes are to be analysed in terms of changes which are non-relational. These are both quite substantial restrictions on what can be counted as events.

The second restriction requires treating places or locations as properties which an object (or place occupier) can change without a change necessarily taking place in some other place occupier. This is possible only if one adopts the absolute space of Newton's physics, which Lombard calls the "substantival view of space".

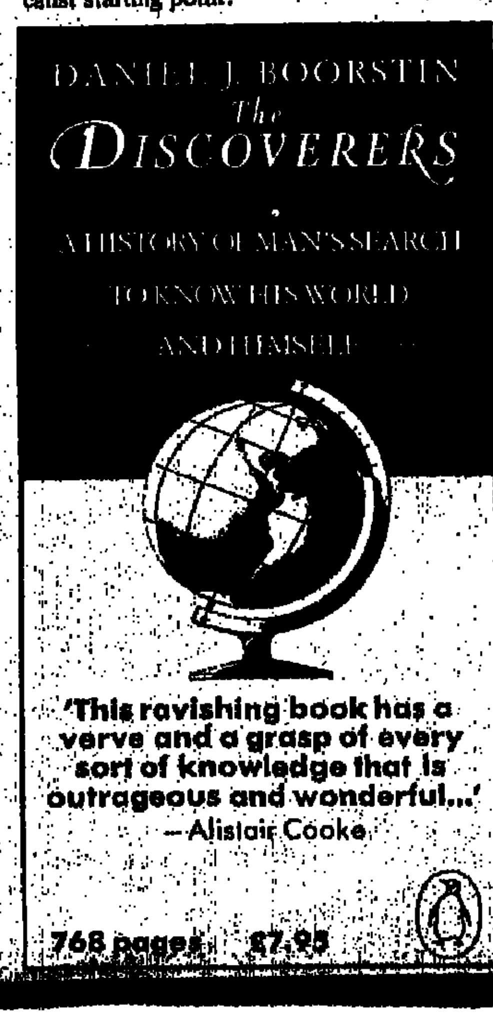
To underwrite the first restriction and rule out instantaneous changes requires an important restriction on the structure of any range of properties between which changes can take place. They can only take place between two properties which an object cannot have at the same time. A range of such properties is called a "quality space", and to rule out the possibility of instantaneous changes Lombard requires the "conjecture" that "ultimate quality spaces" are "dense". This means that for any two properties in a quality space it must be possible (in some sense) to say that there is another property "between them".

The criterion which Lombard offers for when two expressions apply to the same event rests in a similar way on a claim of some substance. This criterion is based on the notion of an "atomic" event, so that the identity of all other events can be treated on the basis of their composition from atomic events. The notion of atomic event rests in turn on the notion of an "atomic object" – an object which, from the standpoint of some scientific theory, has no parts. Lombard takes it that scientific theories are in part theories about the ultimate constituents of things, as well as "the ultimate quality spaces through which ultimate objects move when they change".

It is far from clear why our right to the concept of an event as a concrete particular should be hostage to so many claims about the aim and ultimate structure of the theories of natural science, claims which may already be out of date. It is not certain that the ultimacy of the objects of a scientific theory needs to be defined in terms of having or lacking parts. It is likely that the substantival view of space, which Lombard requires, has been decisively overthrown by relativity theory. And there seems nothing in the practice of theoretical science which would guarantee the density of ultimate quality spaces.

It is difficult to assess the contribution which this book might make to the wider issues which it addresses. Its claims are not connected to any of the arguments which its author says are appropriate to establish the existence of the metaphysical category of events. The account offered seems to have the status of a hypothesis waiting to be tested. Indeed Lombard at one point describes his project as "hypothetico-descriptive metaphysics". But why should this account be preferred to those which allow instantaneous events, relational changes not reducible to non-relational changes and identity that does not rest on composition from atoms?

Lombard is what Kant would have called a dogmatic metaphysician, although one could hardly find a less dogmatic-sounding dogmatist. Throughout he writes with measured deliberateness, scrupulous clarity and occasional gestures of mild self-deprecation. Details are carefully argued at every stage in ways which illuminate and advance side-issues. For those who are not too concerned about where Lombard leaves the wider issues, this book has much to offer.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Paradigms of leadership

Peter Green

J. K. ANDERSON
Hunting in the Ancient World
192pp. University of California Press. $32.50.
0520051971
E. C. MARCHANT (Editor)
Xenophontis Opera Omnia
Tomus V: Opuscula
Oxford: Clarendon Press. £8.50.
019814556X

Ancient venery has been lucky in its modern exponents, most of whom, like Edouard Delebecque and J. K. Anderson, are not only professional classicists but also themselves seasoned hunters. Delebecque, in an appendix to his brilliant little edition of Xenophon's *Cynegeticus*, wrote the definitive explanation of the use of nets in antiquity, while D. B. Hull, the author of *Hounds and Hunting in Ancient Greece* (1964) – which Professor Anderson's *Hunting in the Ancient World* complements rather than replaces – was for many years a Master of Foxhounds. Not that ancient hunting bore all that much resemblance to its modern counterpart: as E. C. Marchant pointed out long ago, whereas in England hunting conjures up a picture of chasing the fox on horseback, to a Greek of Xenophon's day it rather suggested the pursuit of the hare on foot. Not even the heroes engaged in the Caledonian boar-hunt were mounted. Beaglers take note.

Riding to hounds tended to be a royal, or at the least an aristocratic, prerogative: Anderson collects all the evidence, archaeological and literary, for examples – Mycenaean, Assyrian, Persian, Macedonian – of this higher sport of kings, where the quarry (till it was hunted out of existence) was, whenever practicable, and appropriately enough, the king of beasts, the lion, which survived longer in parts of eastern Europe than many readers might suppose, and in western Asia throughout antiquity. Stags, leopards, panthers, even bears, also figure, with the more common boar and deer, on our surviving monuments. It is no accident that Cyrus and Alexander, heroic figures to whom our prime literary sources on ancient hunting, Xenophon and Arrian, devoted major works, were both addicts of the chase. To them hunting was a paradigm of moral excellence, a training for leadership; even Christians came to regard it as symbolic of virtue in this life and the life to come.

Anderson deliberately restricts his engrossing (and beautifully produced) little monograph to what I suppose might be termed the amateur gentlemen of the ancient hunting world, and this in many ways is a pity. We learn next to nothing about bird-liming, fishing, or the ways in which country peasants helped out the pot by snaring and trapping small game. Nor is the professional hunter represented. And while no one would expect, in such a book, a guide to the killing of captive beasts to make a Roman holiday, Anderson also draws the line at "the hunt as a source of literary images; religious and funerary symbolism; the heroization of the hunter, especially of the monarch who hunts": omissions which open up a tantalizing vista of missed opportunities, not least in a book one could have wished at least twice as long.

What we do get, however, is excellent, with lavish quotations from ancient sources and crisply authoritative glossing of technical problems. Anderson brings to his task a cool eye as well as a most elegant style: both seat and hands, you might say, are eminently reliable. He also takes his trickier fences with some panache: his well-mannered, almost apologetic debunking of Pierre Vidal-Naquet's mythic notions about nocturnal hunting is pure delight. He briskly discredits the late romantic legend of Spartan huntresses; he raps Xenophon over the knuckles for his unforgivable recommendation to hunt hinds in the breeding season with fawns as bait. He offers a close analysis of the dangers and complexities of boar-hunting – a Macedonian speciality: no Macedonian noble who had not speared his boar without benefit of nets was allowed to recline at table, so that Cassander in his mid-thirties still sat upright like an untried adolescent.

Some anecdotes about Hellenistic feats in the hunting-field (one would have liked more on the Ptolemaic hunting of elephants) lead in to a final survey of the chase under the Roman empire – Hadrian, surprisingly, turns out to have been as avid a big-game hunter as he was a culture-fancier – with full use made of the valuable mosaics on country life at Piazza Armerina and in North Africa. These chapters assemble much evidence that was previously scattered and hard to come by, and the book as a whole, though primarily descriptive, forms an introduction to the subject that manages to be immensely readable without in any way sacrificing scholarly standards. The specialist, too, will find much of interest here, not least in the artfully throw-away notes.

One point he will certainly spot-check Anderson over is the authenticity of the *Cynegeticus*. Is it, after all, *echt* Xenophon throughout, or (as Mewaldt argued as long ago as 1911) revised and augmented, perhaps during the Second Sophistic, by some late editor, to whom Mewaldt himself attributed the prologue, and others (Anderson at one time included) the epilogue? Anderson now follows Delebecque in regarding the entire work as genuine; he also, surprisingly, cites Marchant's introduction to his 1925 Loeb edition for this view, where in fact Marchant still (p xlii) regards the exordium as spurious. Not, in hunting terms, an arser, and certainly venial in comparison to the slapdash attitude implied by yet another reprint, uncorrected, of Marchant's 1920 Oxford Classical Text of Xenophon's *Opuscula*, the *Cynegeticus* included. Not only has the text of Xenophon been tidied up a good deal since 1920 (as any reader of Delebecque, to look no further, will know); there is also the fact that between 1920 and 1925 Marchant changed his mind on the authenticity of the *Cynegeticus*, so that his first statement, still enshrined in the preface ("Equidem hoc tantum sentio, libellum nostrum qualem nunc legimus non ab ipso Xenophonte scriptum esse"), has now been out of date for sixty years – eloquent testimony to the persistent and unjustifiable disregard in which Xenophon continues to be held by too many serious scholars.

Records limited

Simon Hornblower

M. I. FINLEY
Ancient History: Evidence and models
131pp. Chatto and Windus. £12.95.
0701130032

Twenty-three years ago, M. I. Finley published a brief and brilliant book called *The Ancient Greeks*, which could have been given as a present to any young reader in the certainty that it would encourage a desire to go further with the subject. Sir Moses has published over a dozen books since then; the latest has most of the excellent qualities of that introductory work of 1963; but it is as superficially discouraging as its predecessor was the opposite – even allowing for the obvious difference that *Ancient History: Evidence and models* is aimed more directly at professional colleagues already working in the field of classical antiquity.

Finley's new book is about correct (and even more about incorrect) ways of doing ancient history. There are six chapters, loosely related at first sight, though an epilogue pulls the threads together successfully. The first four chapters are about literary and documentary sources: Finley combats the idea that primacy of esteem should be awarded to the first over the second sort, but warns against any idea that even documents can be supposed to "speak for themselves". Chapter Five, entitled "Wars and Empire", emphasizes the greed motive. Chapter Six is a disapproving essay about Max Weber, which will surprise those readers of *The Ancient Economy* (1973) who thought that Finley could be classed as, if anything, a Weberian in his general approach. Much of the book has appeared before, but in specialist journals.

What is it that seems at first so discouraging about this book? Simply, the austerity, even savagery, with which Finley argues for his undeniable conclusion that "the severe limits to what we can possibly know about the ancient world can be pushed out a bit, even substantially, but they can never be broken". Four "propositions" are set out at the beginning of the epilogue; Finley might have added, as a fifth, this sentence from the last page of the book: "except for perhaps Athens and Rome, no ancient city is susceptible to a proper historical account". It has been a constant theme of Finley's recent books that the writing of monographs about particular ancient states is a waste of time. My only qualm about this is that it is so very sweepingly put. If one thinks of some recent monographs, Corinth offers just enough evidence to allow a genuinely Corinthian viewpoint to emerge (although Finley disagrees with this), but Corinth's immediate neighbours Sikyon and Megara do not. For one thing, Corinth was powerful enough, for large stretches of her history, to have had a foreign policy worth the name. If I suggest timidly that there are grades of practicability and futility, I do not wish to deny that there are plenty of non-subjects in ancient history, many of them the subjects of successful doctoral dissertations (there comes to mind Sir Ronald Syme's famous suggestion for a PhD thesis, "Human Rights in Ancient Carthage"). But must we really be confined to Athens and Rome? The strong proposition that a "proper historical account" cannot be given of Megara, Sikyon or Corinth is surely true; but, as Finley himself says in this book, "a historian must deploy different strategies according to the nature of the evidence available to him"; and attempts to get away from Athens and Rome do have the merit of reminding us that those two states were untypical and that there was immense variety.

The German scholar Eberhard Ruschenbusch has recently estimated that there were some 700 classical Greek states, about most of which we know nothing, and most of which were certainly never powerful enough to have had a foreign policy at all. It follows that few would venture to write a monograph about any but a small number of the 700. But I wonder if the "proper historical account" formula should really be allowed to reduce such a large total to just two, unless we are to lose sight of the points about variety and untypicality on which Moses Finley himself [illegible]

Digging and dating

Glyn Daniel

H. V. F. WINSTONE
Uncovering the Ancient World
393pp. Constable. £14.95.
0094647208

H. V. F. Winstone, who published a biography of Gertrude Bell in 1978, and whose chief interests, we are told, are pottery and the politics and exploration of the Near East, here essays the difficult task – even for a professional archaeologist – of writing the history of the development of archaeology in what Gordon Childe called "the Most Ancient East", and in Crete and Greece. It is a long book, over 200,000 words, and curiously organized – it would have been better to treat each area separately from beginning to end; but it is packed with facts, many of them strange, such as that the Egyptologist Auguste Mariette taught French for a while at the Shakespeare House Academy, Stratford-upon-Avon! The treatment is uneven: while Schliemann's work is assessed in relation to the recent criticisms of Calder, Traill and Easton, there are only passing references to Kathleen Kenyon's work at Jericho and Jerusalem, and Braidwood and Mellaart are not mentioned at all. Throughout, the effect of Carbon-14 dating on the detailed chronology of the ancient world is given no prominence.

There are sharp and often percipient vignettes of archaeologists: Petrie is "the most prodigal of British archaeologists", Lady Petrie "a capable if divisive excavator and site manager, and a hopeless housekeeper", Hogarth "a prolific writer and somewhat careless archaeologist", Lady Woolley (so well portrayed in Agatha Christie's *Murder in Mesopotamia*) was "quick-witted, prejudiced and insidious; an unashamed snob with all the wiles associated with her sex and few of its charms, except good looks", Howard Carter "a moody, ill-tempered and occasionally violent artist who deferred to nobody . . . with a characteristic belief in his own infallibility". Winstone wonders, as so many have done, that while Petrie, Evans, Woolley, Mallowan and even the Frenchman Maspero, were knighted, Carter was "denied the petty satisfaction of scrolls and ribands".

He describes Edward Daniel Clarke as "the Cambridge geographer" who arrived at Acre in the summer of 1801 and was "the first to apply secular scholarship, it might almost be true to say 'scientific method', as opposed to ecclesiastical tradition, to the study of Palestinian antiquities". Clarke was a considerable traveller, Professor of Mineralogy and University Librarian. He was also a great collector and presented the colossal Cistophoros of Eleusis ("the goddess in a dunghill buried to her ears") to his own university. He befriended and encouraged John Disney, who followed in his footsteps as traveller and collector, and founded the first Chair of Archaeology in Britain. Winstone's praise of Clarke demands a revaluation of the life and work of this unusual and gifted man, once nearly lynched by the people of Cambridge for having sent up his cat in a balloon.

The book is a chronicle, but it would have been nice to have had the author's comments on the controversial issues which were aroused by the discoveries he lists in such detail as, for example, the interrelations of the civilizations of Egypt and Sumer. Petrie, Elliot Smith and others believed Egypt to be the source of all civilization. Woolley was prejudiced towards Sumer and often declared that Egypt derived its models and ideas "from an older civilization which had long been developing and flourishing in the Euphrates Valley". Who was right? Mallowan said of Woolley that "Egypt was his bugbear" and declared that "both civilizations, Egyptian and Sumerian, developed more or less *pari passu*". So did the ancient civilizations of the Indus Valley and China, and so, Colin Renfrew argues, did the civilization of the Aegean. These are exciting issues which the uncovering of the ancient world has forced us to consider.

Winstone is very good and fair about the Moab stone and the 1878 Dead Sea Scrolls – declared genuine by Güthe and Ginsburg – but denounced as a forgery by Schlottman, Sayle and Clermont-Ganneau. Ginsburg wrote to *The Times* in 1883 saying that the British Museum intended to purchase them: a million pounds was the sum mentioned, and Queen Victoria, excited by the prospect of this purchase, offered to underwrite it. In a second letter to *The Times*, Ginsburg conceded defeat. The Russian Jewish émigré, Moses Shapira, who ran an antique shop in Jerusalem and to whom the Arab fortune-hunters had brought the fifteen strips of parchment, shot himself in 1884, a year after the scrolls had been sold in London for £10. Winstone poses a question, now that the Dead Sea Scrolls found in 1947 are generally accepted as genuine: the Shapira scrolls (published in facsimile in the *Illustrated London News* 1883) are, he says, almost identical. Were they wrongly dismissed as forgeries? And where are they?

The book is well illustrated with 130 unnumbered photographs, many in colour, but the illustrations are not keyed in to the text and some of the captions are irrelevant, such as "sold at Sotheby's in July 1981 for £68,000". The twenty-two-page bibliography is not as helpful to the general reader as it should be and contains strange entries like "*Antiquity* Vol I (1927) – Vol. LVIII (1984)" and the *Annuals* of the British Schools at Ankara, Teheran, Baghdad, Athens and Rome. The reader wants to know which articles in these and many other cited journals he should read. Indeed what is sadly missing from this book is an organized guide to further reading.

Reverberant plans

Sherban Cantacuzino

MICHAEL FORSYTH
Buildings for Music: The architect, the musician, and the listener from the seventeenth century to the present day
371pp. Cambridge University Press. £30.
0521 26862 1

As Michael Forsyth's subtitle, "The architect, the musician and the listener . . .", makes clear his *Buildings for Music* is a consideration of the influences that architectural acoustics have exerted on musical style and the importance of musical factors in auditorium design. Forsyth reminds us that composers have always written for the particular acoustics of the space in which it was intended that their work would be performed, and he cites, among other examples, the differences between Purcell's compositions for Westminster Abbey and those for the Chapel Royal, as well as the way in which Haydn developed an almost orchestral style of string quartet writing for Salomon's Hanover Square Rooms.

To a lesser extent, architects also designed their buildings to fit particular musical-acoustic needs, though Forsyth's contention that eighteenth-century opera houses with their very short reverberation time were designed "to enable the listener to hear the words and the highly articulated music detail of rapidly sung passages, especially at the tongue-twisting tempi of Mozart and Rossini arias" is questionable – if only because most of the examples he gives were built before Mozart had written any operas and well before Rossini was born. Musical-acoustic needs were the consequence rather than the cause of the most spectacular development of all. As the concert-going public expanded rapidly in the nineteenth century, so the halls became larger, and it was in response to these much larger halls that orchestras grew and musical instruments were modified to produce a louder tone.

The concert-hall has its origin in the palace ballroom, but is in its separate entity a seventeenth-century English invention developed in the eighteenth century when London was the musical centre of Europe, visited by the most famous composers and performers of the day. There were two kinds of hall, the concert room like Hickford's Great Room in Brewer Street, which seated 300, and the pleasure garden like Vauxhall (where Arne was composer-in-residence), which attracted very large numbers – as is shown by the attendance in 1749 of 12,000 people at a performance of Handel's Fireworks Music: Vauxhall, the author reminds us, is the Russian Vokzal, which originally meant concert-hall. The pleasure garden, which was often established around a medicinal well (hence the origin of the Sadler's Wells Theatre) was the forerunner of the vast nineteenth-century pleasure palace, like Surrey Gardens, Alexandra Palace and Crystal Palace, the last becoming, after its re-erection at Sydenham and despite its more than inadequate acoustics, "the most important location for introducing the music of British composers".

Of the early "rooms", only one, the Holywell Music Room at Oxford, survives, as part of the University's Music Department. Forsyth is good on the nineteenth century, particularly on John Nash's Argyll Rooms in Regent Street; the 3,000-seat St Martin's Hall in Long Acre, completed in 1850 and consumed by fire exactly ten years later; and Owen Jones's St James's Hall, which made way for the Piccadilly Hotel in 1905. By then the Queen's Hall, destroyed by German bombs in 1941, had been in existence twelve years. He is also good on the Romantic imagination and quotes Berlioz's extraordinary transmogrification of a charity concert in St Paul's Cathedral (with its choir rearranged as an amphitheatre) into a vision of John Martin's "Satan presiding at the Infernal Council". His enthusiasm for St George's Hall in Liverpool (perhaps the greatest architectural product of the Romantic imagination) is timely; its acoustically excellent great room, built expressly as a concert-hall, unlike most of the Victorian Town Halls which were intended for civic functions, generally, is nowadays closed and threatened, like the rest of the building, with dereliction.

Despite a justifiable English bias, the author does not neglect Europe. We learn, for example, that Leipzig's Altes Gewandhaus of 1781, one of the oldest public concert-halls in Europe and the predecessor of the Neues Gewandhaus, which became the prototype for the popular and acoustically excellent shoe-box hall, postdates by more than a century York Buildings in Villiers Street, London, the earliest "fabrick, reared and furnished on purpose for publick musick", according to a contemporary observer.

With the opera house, of course, it was the reverse. Opera was invented at the Court of the Medici in sixteenth-century Florence. It spread to Rome and then to Venice, where there were no fewer than eight opera houses by 1679. In London the first opera seasons were held at the King's Theatre in the 1720s. Compared with the concert room and pleasure garden the rate of survival of eighteenth-century opera houses is high, so that their excessively dry acoustics may still be experienced today. The book includes a maddeningly incomplete chronological table of concert-halls and opera houses, with their dimensions and acoustics, from which we learn, for example, that the opera house at Eszterhaza has four times the volume of Drottningholm, but only fifty more seats, and that this makes the difference between an estimated 1.2 and 0.85 seconds' reverberation time.

The vast Victorian pleasure palaces and the acoustically disastrous Albert Hall aside, one of the first departures from the shoe-box hall representing a substantial increase in numbers was the Chicago Auditorium (1889) with its 4,237 seats. Hitherto, shoe-box halls had expanded from around 1,500 to over 2,000 seats. One of the last and acoustically most successful buildings of this type was the Boston Symphony Hall (1900) with more than 2,500 seats. Forsyth explodes a number of myths about shoe-box halls, among them that flat floors were essential for good acoustics (raked seating would have resulted in even better acoustics) and that their wooden construction caused the surfaces to resonate and reinforce the sound like a violin (strong reverberance and a full-bodied bass tone depend on hard rigid surfaces which reflect and retain sound). What has only recently been realized, on the other hand, is the importance of the narrow width of these buildings, which creates a short time-gap between the direct and laterally reflected sound, and determines the "liveness" of the hall.

Forsyth is revealing about the science of acoustics, though it remains a puzzle why Sabine, whose experiments led to the important discovery that the absorption of the room multiplied by the reverberation time is a constant number and who advised on the design of the Boston Symphony Hall, was ignored in favour of Adler (of Adler and Sullivan). For it was Adler's half-baked theories which were the cause of the "direct sound" halls of the 1920s and 30s with their unsatisfactory acoustics of "great clarity at the expense of adequate loudness and fullness of tone". In America this tendency culminated in the theories of F. R. Watson (1923), who maintained, incredibly, that the ideal concert-hall should have the acoustic of an outdoor music pavilion. Acoustic taste was also influenced by the gramophone and the recording studio which, together with the demand for both more, and more comfortable, seating, resulted in a series of major acoustic failures, like the Salle Pleyel in Paris (1927) and the Lincoln Center's Philharmonic Hall in New York (1962), both of which have a seating capacity of well under 3,000.

While it is true that much has been learnt about acoustics in recent years and that this has reduced the rate of failure in concert-halls, not everyone will share the author's enthusiasm for acoustic variability (whether mechanically or electronically controlled), or his optimism about a future dominated by composers like Boulez and Stockhausen specifying and even designing "the architectural context in which their music is to be performed". Wagner, of course, did precisely this when he built the Bayreuth Festspielhaus, but Wagner was in every sense the exception. If we consider the whole corpus of music to be performed, what is being composed today is only a tiny fraction, and the need for first-rate conventional halls is likely to remain for a long time to come.

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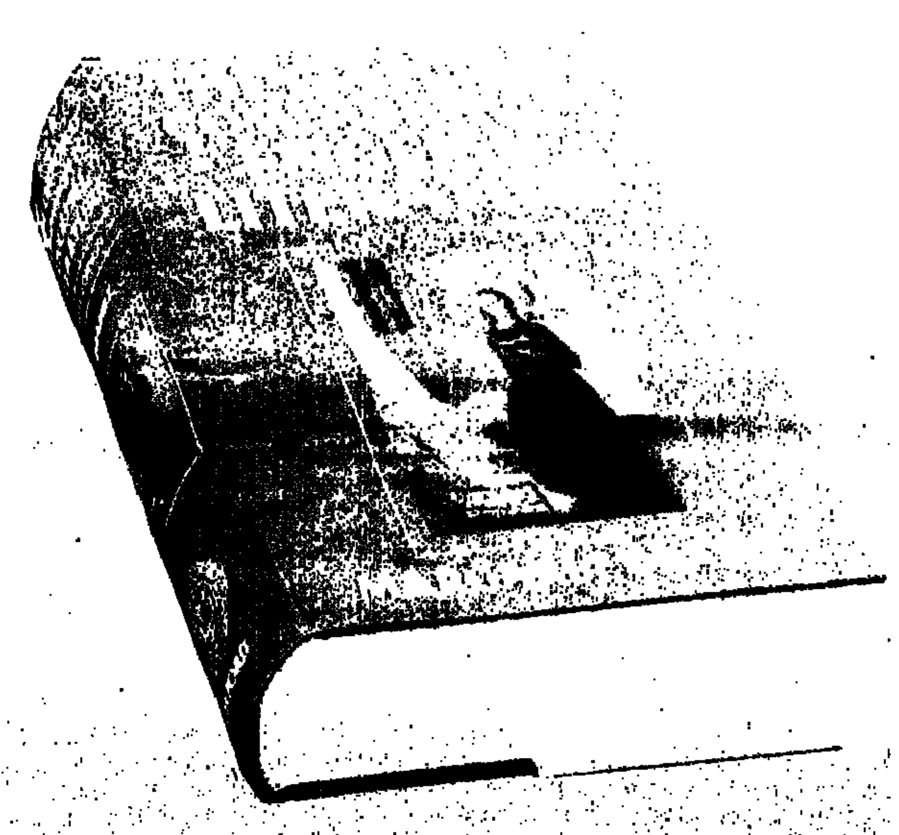
TLS April 26 1985



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The policeman inside

T. J. Binyon

LEON GARFIELD
The December Rose
208pp. Viking Kestrel. £6.95.
0670 81054 1

Absalom Brown, better known as Barnacle from his amazing powers of holding on, is, like Tom in *The Water Babies*, a Victorian sweep's boy who falls down the wrong chimney. He lands in the middle of a dark and devious plot, flees in terror clutching by accident its key, a golden locket, and is then pursued relentlessly throughout the book by Inspector Creaker, "a dark and terrible figure, shaped like a coffin, with enormous square-toed boots".

The book was recently a BBC1 television serial; it is, in fact, a children's version of the currently fashionable *Edge of Darkness*-type thriller, in which the righteous individual or group confronts an evil and corrupt establishment, which is misusing justice and the force of law. Here the good, the side of the individual and his private conscience, is represented by Tom Gosling, master of the Thames barge Lady of the Lea. "The policeman inside his head was paid his wages by a different government from the one who paid the policeman on the corner of the street", remarks the author, and Gosling himself, repeating the sentiment, bangs the nail through the wood: "There's a law inside of us all that we has to abide by, and sometimes it's a different law from the law of the land." He takes Barnacle in, feeds him, washes him – making him temporarily unrecognizable – reforms him, humanizes him, teaches him self-sacrifice, and in the end is saved by him, when this new Barnacle goes alone to meet the dread Inspector Creaker. On the other side stand Ministers of State, Lord Hobart and Mr Hastymite (there's a pleasingly Dickensian touch about some of Garfield's names); and, between the two, Inspector Creaker, incorruptible and inflexibly principled, who cannot bend and must, therefore, in the end break.

The December Rose is a colourful, ebulliently lively book, which is by turns amusing, exciting and touching. It is narrated in the third person, but in that subjective, impressionistic manner which tends to empathize with rather than describe. Do children prefer this to the staider, old-fashioned, more objective narrative voice? If not, they probably should. At the same time the book is, in its own way, no less moralistic than Kingsley's Victorian tale, and – despite a veneer of social realism – even perhaps shares some of its predecessor's sentimentality. For a clear, cold, hard look at life and death in a children's book one still has to turn to Beatrix Potter's *The Tale of Mr Tod*.

A modern Boadicea

Miranda Seymour

RUTH ELWIN HARRIS
The Silent Shore
260pp. Julia MacRae. £7.95.
0 86203 239 3

The setting is rural Somerset, the period the early part of this century, pleasantly evoked in descriptions of rectory teas and fat glass jars of treacle toffees in the village sweetshop; young ladies put up their hair and let down their skirts, while their little sisters bury their noses in Henty and Harrison Ainsworth.

The story is of the children of two neighbouring families, the four orphaned Purcell girls and the three Mackenzie boys. Sensibly, since she plans to write books about each of the sisters in turn, Ruth Elwin Harris has kept the focus here on three characters while quietly introducing her larger cast. Sarah, the youngest girl (she is seven when the story starts), is entranced by Gabriel Mackenzie, clever, handsome, kind and thoughtful – and not nearly such a prig as that description makes him sound. Gabriel in turn is in love with Sarah's headstrong red-haired sister, Frances, a modern Boadicea in her sibling's eyes. All the Purcells with the exception of Sarah are gifted artists, but Frances, the most talented, is also the most ambitious. Unfortunately for poor long-suffering Gabriel, who has always been her most loyal supporter in her defiances of convention, Frances is not prepared to put love before her career. To Sarah, who can imagine nothing more wonderful than to marry Gabriel, she seems extraordinarily cruel. Time teaches her that Frances's love, however perverse the form it takes, is as strong as her own.

The two sisters make good foils for each other, a little in the style of Louisa May Alcott's madcap Jo and sedate Beth of *Little Women*. Frances is a convincing New Woman, refusing to see the war as a glorious venture and going off to study at the Slade in the days when most young ladies kept their easels in the drawing-room. Sarah, dreamy and reticent, has to be pushed towards the discovery that she, too, is gifted, clever enough to get a place at Oxford. Left to herself, she would happily have settled for less, so long as Gabriel was there.

> The garden drowsed in the summer sun. Cabbage whites fluttered over the nettles that grew thickly between wall and greenhouse; bees hung round the herb garden and over the sedums. In front of the pale spikes of the delphiniums' second flowering, blue-black poppy heads flopped onto the red path.
>
> It's my garden of Eden anyway, Sarah thought. Please don't ever send me away.

The Silent Shore is, in the best sense of that usually derogatory term, an old-fashioned book, a good read with a strong moral underpinning. It is a book of the kind at which Noel Streatfeild and Olivia Fitzroy excelled. The story easily engages interest, the characters are clearly and sympathetically drawn. Striving to excel is made to seem worth the effort. All Ruth Elwin Harris needs to guard against is an occasional tendency to let virtuous thoughts get the better of her writing.

Bygone states

Patricia Craig

J. S. ANDREWS
The Bell of Nendrum
200pp. Blackstaff. £7.95.
0 85640 353 9.

The bell of Nendrum is an archaeological object saved for posterity by a boy projected back through the centuries to a monastic settlement on an island in Strangford Lough, in Northern Ireland. Nial Ross, fifteen, goes sailing on his own, gets caught in a very peculiar storm, and lands at a spot where the familiar features of the landscape aren't as they ought to be. The place has reverted to a bygone state.

This is brought home to Nial when he meets a slender monk, and finds himself able to converse with this character of the tenth century in a language the author strangely calls Erse, but which might more properly have been labelled Old Irish, or Gaelic. Like other time-travellers in children's fiction, Nial is very matter-of-fact about the supernatural transition which has overtaken him. His equanimity is hardly affected at all; and the monks, in their turn, aren't in the least thrown by the presence among them of a visitor from the future. They are, however, greatly intrigued by such gadgets of the twentieth century as timepieces and outboard motors.

We learn a good deal about the life of the settlement and the ever-present danger of Viking raids; and it isn't long before Nial, in company with his new friends, falls into Viking hands and sees in action the flair for slaughter and depredation of these terrorists of the Middle Ages. It is then that the purpose of his time-shift becomes clear; he's to make off with certain treasures after the destruction of Aendrum (Nendrum). The quest is arduous and gory, and related with gusto. First published in [illegible] J. S. Andrews's story is an interesting addition to the time-travelling [illegible]

Jonah and the Great Fish, *Warwick Hutton's retold and illustrated version of the Bible story, has recently been published by Dent (£5.50. 0 460 06238 7).*

Peace-offerings

Nicole Irving

JENNY OVERTON
The Ship from Simnel Street
141pp. Faber. £7.95.
0 571 13649 4

Jenny Overton's *The Ship from Simnel Street* is a lively book which deserves praise on many counts. Set in a small coastal town in Sussex at the time of the Peninsular War, it concerns the family of Jonathan Oliver, a Master Baker. The book contains a wealth of careful detail and abounds in songs which children sing in the streets or which characters use to convey messages they do not know how to write. Jenny Overton knits all her material together and puts everything to use: her story is quick-paced and economically written.

The busy bakery with its apprentices and old hands, and the Olivers' adjoining house with its own rhythms of housework, jam-making, cooking and washing, provide a busy setting for the romantic story at the heart of the book. The Olivers' daughters, Suzannah and Polly, are intelligent, independent girls who discreetly shrug off their mother's attempts to secure for them good, comfortable marriages. To that end, Mrs Oliver has ensured that they are educated and well brought up. But Polly has set her heart on a young Rifleman, Dick Fletchling. An out-of-work, illiterate shepherd, Dick has joined the Army to avoid being press-ganged, but his regiment now leaves for the war in Spain. Polly's determination and independent spirit lead her to run away, unbeknown even to her sister; Suzannah establishes that Polly, disguised as a clerk, has made her way to Lisbon from where she hopes to join Dick on the British lines. Jonathan sets out in the hope of finding his daughter.

Much of the book describes life in Polly's and Jonathan's absence as Suzannah becomes involved in the work at the bakery. Soon, Mrs Oliver devises an ambitious plan for the bakery to produce an enormous baking of bridal-cake, to buy a ship and have the cakes taken to Dick's regiment. She hopes Polly will recognize them as a blessing from her family. The work of baking is huge, as is the cost of the project. The house is put up as a security, and friends and neighbours help in any way possible. In these exceptional circumstances, Mrs Oliver sets aside her pettier concerns and shows her determination and sense of initiative, while Suzannah proves her ability to work hard; she virtually steps into her father's shoes. The story ends when Polly comes home, married and now pregnant; a baby girl is born, and Polly has plans to enable her to live independently, despite her firm hopes for Dick's safe return. Suzannah will begin an apprenticeship in the bakery – an idea which her mother would not have accepted in the past.

The book shows us a family growing closer and stronger in the face of trials: comfortable relationships of dependence are replaced by a deeper trust and desire to support loved ones in their chosen designs. One could regret that the stories Jonathan and Polly tell of their journeys are brief. However, it is clearly not Jenny Overton's intention to write an adventure story, nor indeed a romantic one: she succeeds in her more rewarding plan to concentrate our attention on the complicated workings of everyday life as lived by ordinary, but courageous and resourceful, individuals in difficult circumstances.

Six titles in Oxford University Press's Archway series have been published this year. The series, which is intended for children of eleven and over, contains novels by contemporary authors presented in "classroom" editions in laminated boards at £2.25 each.

The books include *Brother in the Land* by Robert Swindells (which was first published in 1984, 0 19 271552 6), *Friend Fire and the Dark Wings* by J. G. Fyson, illustrated by Annabel Large (1983; 0 19 271539 9), *The Oak and the Ash* by Frederick Grice, illustrated by Trevor Ridley (1986; 0 19 271538 0) *Terry on the Fence* by Bernard Ashley, illustrated by Charles Keeping (1975; 0 19 271537 2), *The Poacher's Son* by Rachel Anderson (1982; 0 19 271545 3) and *The Demon Headmaster* by Gillian Cross, illustrated by Gary Rees (1982; 0 19 271553 4). Each title has an afterword by the author. Other titles in the series include novels by Peter Carter, Eileen Dunlop, Nigel Hinton, K. M. Peyton, Rosemary Sutcliff and John Rowe Townsend. An *Archway Novel Teacher's Guide* by Alastair West [illegible] £2.50, 0 19 271536 4) is also available.

Hamish Hamilton's Cartwheels, a series of story books for beginner readers is aimed at children who have just learned to read. The first four titles in the series are *The Roundabout Horse* by Rosemary Sutcliff, illustrated by Alan Marks (0 241 11731 3), *Ursula at the Zoo* by Sheila Lavelle, illustrated by Thelma Lambert (0 241 11728 3), *Little Elephant's Moon* by Adèle Geras, illustrted by Linda Birch (0 241 11729 1) and *Mrs Simkin and the Very Big Mushroom* by Linda Allen, illustrated by Margaret Chamberlain. Cartwheels are [illegible] each.

Paperbacks

Biography and memoirs

Christopher Sykes. *Four Studies in Loyalty*. 224pp. Century Hutchinson. £5.95. 0 7126 9458 7. ☐ The reputation of these subtly linked biographical sketches owes much to the harmony of a mellifluous prose style and a good-humoured worldliness – a combination which works best in the first two studies. In the one, the snobbish devotion of the author's great-uncle, a Victorian Christopher Sykes, to the future King Edward VII brings him only Widmerpoolian humiliation (his jovial Prince douses him with brandy rather than sugar) and near-bankruptcy; in the other, a gentlemanly Persian pimp, Bahram Kirmani, rises gloriously from physical and moral squalor, to proclaim his faith in Balliol; both of these give off a fine high-comic glow. In the more straightforward portrait of Sykes's friend and travelling companion, the Oxford notability Robert Byron, the method veers towards the hagiographical; compare, for example, Evelyn Waugh's brief but altogether sharper sketch, in *A Little Learning*, of Byron as an undergraduate – "I hate abroad" declaims the future author of *The Road to Oxiana*. Loyalty may be undervalued by a cynical age which can match anything that Byron's and Waugh's Oxford threw down; masochism, exploitation, will muddy the issue. So it is good to be reminded in the book's final section – an account of Sykes's own activities behind enemy lines in the Vosges in 1944 – of the sacrifices made by hundreds of the region's inhabitants out of loyalty to the Allied cause. *Four Studies in Loyalty* was first published in 1946 and reviewed in the *TLS* of November 23 that year.

Langston Hughes. *The Big Sea*. 335pp. Pluto. £4.95. 0 7453 0134 7. ☐ Langston Hughes is famous as the leading poet of what has come to be known as the Harlem Renaissance. In *The Big Sea* (first published in 1940 and reviewed in the *TLS* of February 15, 1941), the first of his two autobiographies, he presents a picture of Harlem at that time which is less flattering than the myth it has generated: "All of us know that the gay and sparkling life of the so-called Negro Renaissance of the '20's was not so gay and sparkling beneath the surface as it looked." He had in mind the ordinary citizens of that celebrated section of New York for whom the sudden and unexpected influx of fashionable whites in search of the exotic amounted merely to an inconvenience. It is this level-headedness, combined with a simple, unpretentious prose, that makes the story of his early life as readable and as moving as that other celebrated autobiography of black American life, Richard Wright's *Black Boy*.

Children's literature

Mary Cadogan and Patricia Craig. *You're a Brick, Angela: The Girls' Story 1839–1945*. 405pp. Gollancz. £4.95. 0 575 03825 X. ☐ Mary Cadogan and Patricia Craig's lively review of the "redundant genre" of fiction for girls (first published in 1976 and reviewed in the *TLS* of July 16 that year) covers both novels and magazine stories. Their short history traces the emancipation of women as reflected in the progression from the evangelical tales of Charlotte M. Yonge and Mrs Gatty to the modern heroine of today's juvenile fiction, via such prototypes as *A Girl Munition Worker*, *The Luckiest Girl in School* and *Sue Barton – Student Nurse*. The authors provide a wealth of documentation, distinguishing genre and sub-genre, tracing motifs such as the cliff-top rescue and the heiress in disguise, rooting out snobbery and propaganda and castigating sentimentality in the pages of *Girls' Chum*, *Schoolgirls' Own*, *Girls' Crystal* and the like. A large section of the book is devoted to the school story – a rich source of proto-feminist texts which flourished between the wars – and glimpses of daily life at Cliff House, Morcove, Chalet and Abbey Schools are as entertaining in themselves ("Madge Minton, a cricket bat in her hand, and carrying batting gloves, was strolling down the passage whistling a César Franck sonata") as the trenchant criticism applied to them ("a degrading example of the type of story sometimes served up to girls"). A postscript covering the 1980s looks at the most encouraging of the current children's authors (such as Jan Mark and Gene Kemp) and at the continuing popularity of the school series in its old and new incarnations.

Education

A. S. Neill. *A Dominie's Log*. 219pp. Hogarth Press. £3.95. 0 7012 0644 6. ☐ First published in 1915, *A Dominie's Log* records A. S. Neill's conflict with the dour system he encountered in his earliest days as a teacher in Gretna Green, tracing the gestation of some of the more liberal ideas later to be developed fully in his foundation of Summerhill School. Ideal and reality most often remain in intriguing tension in Gretna: the intransigence of the school board, for example, obliges Neill to concern himself as much with gravel for the playground as with the introduction of Ibsen and eurhythmics. Such quotidian details are as engaging as Neill's sometimes whimsical theorizing around them. The reissue of *A Dominie's Log* is as welcome for its account of the daily life of its age as for its portrayal of its author and his ideas: Neill often moves beyond educational problems to examine the wider injustices of his times, and to sketch, in a series of concise anecdotes, the particularities of the Gretna community which unhesitatingly pronounced its dominie daft.

"Hero", a hawk kept as a pet and painted by Emily Brontë, taken from The Brontës *by Phyllis Bentley (144pp, with 140 black-and-white illustrations. Thames and Hudson. £3.25. 0 500 26016 8), first published in 1969.*

Literature

Rainer Maria Rilke. *Rodin and Other Prose Pieces*. Translated by G. Craig Houston. 167pp. Quartet. £4.95. 0 7043 3495 X. ☐ Almost all his life, Rilke was best known as the author of "The Lay of the Love and Death of Cornet Christoph Rilke", a tiny prose romance of 1899: his publisher told him that if all the copies of it were laid out on the ground, it would take fifteen minutes to walk their length. It is included here, at the end of *Rodin and Other Prose Pieces* (an enlarged edition of a volume first published in 1954, reviewed in the *TLS* of August 6 that year), by now regarded as a kind of youthful curiosity. The other pieces are all discursive, most of them treating those inanimate, half-animate, breathed-upon things that held his attention and affection: the outstanding piece in the collection is, perhaps, "Some Reflections on Dolls". All of them display the perverse, agile, paradoxical nature of Rilke's intelligence, a sometimes less than natural prose manner, and always unsettlingly simple and brilliant similes: "that man with the broken nose, unforgettable as a suddenly raised fist".

Travel

Carl Bock. *The Head-Hunters of Borneo: A narrative of travel up the Mahakkam and down the Barito*. 344pp. Oxford University Press. £6.95. 0 19 582629 9. ☐ When the Norwegian explorer and naturalist, Carl Alfred Bock (1849–1932), first published his book in 1881, the Bornean hinterland and its inhabitants were little known to the outside world. The thousand-mile journey which he successfully accomplished, from Kutei to Banjermasin, was a genuine first in European exploration and took Bock through much uncharted territory. His book reads extremely well and is full of vivid detail – the author's account of the Kutei sultanate and his seven-week stay with the Medang of Long Wai are especially interesting. Unfortunately, Bock's skill as a writer was not balanced by any scientific competence: his lack of linguistic knowledge (he only knew a few words in Malay), combined with his rather uncritical spirit, led him into some crass errors. He appears to have believed, for example, in the existence of the so-called *orang buntut* ("men with tails"), whom he thought might provide the vital "missing link" between man and his ape ancestors, and his description of the Tring Dayaks as "cannibals" is clearly false. As R. H. W. Reece points out in his informative introduction, there was little in the ethnographical descriptions that was new and much that was downright suspect. Bock's account, for long a collector's item, is greatly enhanced by the author's sensitive line drawings and colour lithographs of the Dayak and Punan.

André Gide. *Travels in the Congo*. Translated by Dorothy Bussy. 309pp. Penguin. £3.95. 0 14 009555 1. ☐ Readers of André Gide's *Journals* will have noticed a gap: nothing between July 1925 and June 1926. *Travels in the Congo* (first published in this translation in 1930 and reviewed in the *TLS* of May 8 that year) contains the missing entries. It is written in journal form, and it records Gide's travels in French Equatorial Africa as a special envoy of the French Colonial Ministry. It is dedicated to Joseph Conrad, whose story *Heart of Darkness* it cites frequently. At first Gide was uncertain why he had agreed to go. But reasons emerged. He fulfilled his desire "to enter profoundly, intimately, into the heart of a country". And he reported angrily on the gross injustices of the colonial administration and the Concessionary Companies whose activities it legitimized: "The immense pity of what I have seen has taken possession of me . . .". His book led eventually to legal reforms. This republication is welcome. But it has been too quickly done. It also lacks a natural appendix: pages 414–17 of Gide's *Journals* (in the Penguin edition), which open with the words "If the book [*Travels in the Congo*] had not already appeared, I should take care to add to the appendix several considerations . . .".

D. H. Lawrence. *Mornings in Mexico*. 91pp. Penguin. £2.95. 0 14 009521 7. ☐ "Formal categories don't matter much in Lawrence", wrote Anthony Burgess in a preface to *D. H. Lawrence and Italy*; it is "obligatory to swallow, or reject, his entire output as one massive literary utterance". Mexico finds Lawrence, once again, at the roots of being, and this report was reviewed in the *TLS* of July 7, 1927. "Mr. Lawrence admits that to feel a repulsion from the Indian is quite natural, and more honest than to be sentimental about him, because the Indian consciousness is a negation of ours." Filtered through Lawrence, this is not made exactly clear. The descriptive passages are fuelled by preposterous philosophizing, along with such familiar excesses as "The pulsing, incalculable fall of the blood", but any attempt to remove these in the hope of producing an orthodox travel book, however brilliant, would have been futile.

Reviews by: J. K. L. Walker, Adewale Maja-Pearce, Lindsay Duguid, Randall Stevenson, Michael Hofmann, Peter Carey, Galen Strawson, Christopher Hawtree.

Also in paperback

Alan Bold. *MacDiarmid: The Terrible Crystal*. 252pp. Routledge and Kegan Paul. £4.95. 0 7102 0881 2. ☐ *TLS*, August 26, 1983.

G. K. Chesterton. *Autobiography*. 348pp. Hamish Hamilton. £5.95. 0 241 11844 1. ☐ *TLS*, November 7, 1936.

Jack London. *The Cruise of the Snark: A Pacific Voyage*. 307pp. KPI. £6.95. 0 7103 0139 1. ☐ First published in 1911.

James Pope Hennessy. *Anthony Trollope*. 400pp. Penguin. £5.95. 0 14 058012 3. ☐ *TLS*, 24 dece

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